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FROM

Prof. G. M. Lane

M. TULLIUS CICERO

OF THE

NATURE OF THE GODS,

IN THREE BOOKS.

PRINTED BY D. A. TALBOYS, OXFORD.

M. TULLIUS CICERO

OF THE

NATURE OF THE GODS,

TRANSLATED,

WITH NOTES CRITICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND

EXPLANATORY,

BY THOMAS FRANCKLIN, D.D.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ASTRONOMY

AND

ANATOMY OF THE ANCIENTS.

LONDON:

WILLIAM PICKERING.

MDCCCXXIX.

9. 29

A

PREFACE.

IN the following books the reader is presented with the doctrines of three of the most considerable sects among the ancients, concerning one of the nicest subjects of human inquiry, the nature of the divine essence; in which three illustrious persons are introduced speaking each in defence of his own favourite sect. The dispute is carried on with a mixture of gravity and raillery; and though all the arguments on either side will not bear the test of unprejudiced reason, yet some of them are strong and persuasive; and even those passages (and some such there are) which are almost ridiculously weak, are not without their advantages to the reader; for the knowledge of many ancient Roman customs, of great part of the theology and mythology of the ancients, and many curious pieces of history, are handed down to us, though introduced with a superstitious regard to the traditions and religious rites and ceremonies of their ancestors.

In this work we have no trivial specimen of the astronomical and anatomical learning of the ancients.

To say anything in commendation of our great author, would be more a proof of my own folly than of his extraordinary worth; for numbers among the unlearned, in all nations where

learning has any footing, have heard enough of Cicero to be desirous of seeing what such an exalted genius can say on any subject.

As we have in these kingdoms many speculative persons who are strangers to the learned languages, I have, on their account, left no passage unexplained, which would otherwise remain obscure to them. One design of my notes is to guard the mind against superstition, and to prepare it for a fair inquiry into truth, without any partial attachment to principles founded only on education and custom.

I have consulted all the various readings, and chose those which seemed most rational to me. I have endeavoured, in my translation, to preserve Tully's manner of writing, not departing from it even in that particular, which has been imputed to him by some as a fault, the prolixity of his periods; for there is generally such a pressing occasion for that prolixity, that the connection of the argument would be broke without it; and to depart from it would be to depart from Cicero's manner of writing.

As I have in my notes prevented the necessity of a long preface, I shall no longer detain the reader from an entertainment prepared for him, near two thousand years ago, by one of the greatest of the ancient Romans, a person of consular dignity, and the friend of Atticus and Brutus.

CICERO

ON THE

NATURE OF THE GODS.

BOOK I.

AS there are many branches of philosophy not yet sufficiently explained, the question concerning the nature of the gods is, as you very well know, Brutus, particularly difficult and obscure; a subject most worthy the inquiry of the mind, and necessary towards modelling religion; concerning which the opinions of the learned are so many, and so different from each other, that a strong argument may be advanced towards proving, that ignorance[a] is the cause, or ori-

[a] Some read *scientiam*, and some *inscientiam*, the latter of which is preferred by some of the best editors and commentators; and Cicero, in his first book *de Divinatione*, makes ignorance the original of philosophy. I doubt not but *inscientiam* is the right reading, for the reasons which I have already given, and because it is better than *scientiam*. To say that knowledge is the original of philosophy, is the same as to say that philosophy is the original of philosophy; for philosophy consists in knowledge; that is, in knowing facts, and how to separate truth from falsehood. It is ignorance, therefore, that incites men (such men as are by nature formed and inclined to philosophise) to inquire after those useful truths to which they are strangers; as other wants press men to procure what is necessary for them.

ginal, of philosophy; and that the Academics[b] are prudent in refusing their assent to things uncertain; for what is more unbecoming a wise man than to judge rashly? or what rashness so unworthy the gravity and stability of a philosopher as to conceive wrongly, or to defend absolutely, what he has not thoroughly examined, and does not clearly comprehend?

In this question many have maintained (which is most likely, and to which opinion, if we follow nature, we are all directed) that there are gods. Protagoras[c] doubted there were any. Diagoras Melius[d], and Theodorus[e] of Cyrene, entirely believed there are none.

[b] The followers of Plato were called Academics, from Academus, who had a place of resort in a grove near Athens; which was, from the possessor of it, called the Academy; and here Plato instructed his disciples in his principles of philosophy. *Ἀκαδημία,—ἀπὸ τίνος ἥρωος ὀνομάθεν Ἀκάδεμου.* Diog. Laert. in his life of Plato.

[c] There were three philosophers of this name; one, says Diogenes Laertius, was an astrologer, and one a Stoic. The person whom Cicero here speaks of, was neither the astrologer nor Stoic. He begun a treatise with these words: *Περὶ μὲν θεῶν οὐκ ἔχω εἰδέναι, εἴθ' ὡς εἰσὶν, εἴθ' ὡς οὐκ εἰσὶν, πολλὰ γὰρ τὰ κωλύοντα εἰδέναι, ἥτε ἀδηλότης, καὶ βραχὺς ὢν ὁ βίος τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.* Concerning the gods, I am unable to arrive at any knowledge whether there are any or not; for there are many impediments to our knowledge, the uncertainty, in particular, and the shortness of human life. This passage of Protagoras is quoted by Diogenes Laertius; and we are told by the same author, that the Athenians banished Protagoras for this beginning of his treatise, and burnt his books in the market-place; from which we see that restraint to freedom of debate is not peculiar to Christian countries; but wherever it is, it is equally an offence to truth, and an obstruction to the discovery of it. Cicero speaks afterwards of Protagoras being banished, and his books burnt.

[d] Diagoras is mentioned by Hesychius the Milesian, in his book of learned men, as a disciple of Democritus, who bought him from slavery because of the genius he discovered in him. He was called the impious, says the same author. Democritus who bought Diagoras was not the great Democritus the Milesian.

[e] Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Aristippus, says that Theodorus was for

They who have affirmed that there are gods, have such variety of sentiments and such dissensions amongst them, that it would be tiresome to enumerate their opinions; for they give us many relations of the forms of the gods, of their places of abode, and of the employment of their lives. These are the heads on which philosophers chiefly differ. But the most considerable part of the dispute is, whether they are wholly inactive; that is, quite indolent, and free from all care and administration of affairs; or, on the contrary, whether all things were made and constituted by them from the beginning; and whether they will continue to be actuated and governed by them to eternity. Here is the great point in debate; and unless this be decided, mankind must necessarily remain in the greatest of errors, and ignorant of what is most important to be known.

Some philosophers, both ancient and modern, conceived that the gods take not the least cognizance of human affairs. If their doctrine is true, of what avail is piety, sanctity, or religion? for these are pure and chaste offices of devotion to the divinity of the gods, admitting the gods take notice of them, and that mankind receives any benefit from the immortal beings. But if the gods neither can nor will help us; if they take no care of us, nor regard our actions; and if mankind can receive no advantage from them; why do we pay any adoration, any honours, or prefer any prayers to them[f]? Piety, like the other virtues, cannot consist in

eradicating all the notions of gods. The reader must observe that they were not only notions of a multiplicity of gods, which are here to be understood, but of Deity itself.

[f] Cicero exerts more of the orator in this passage than the philosopher. This is only declaiming, not reasoning, against the Epicureans. If they

dissimulation: and without piety, neither sanctity nor religion can be supported; the destruction of which must be attended with great confusion and a life of trouble; and I do not know[g], if we cast off piety towards the gods, but that faith[h], society, and that most excellent of all virtues, justice, may be likewise destroyed.

There are other philosophers, and those truly great and illustrious, who conceive the whole world to be directed and governed by the will and wisdom of the gods; nor do they stop here, but conceive likewise that the deities consult and provide for the preservation of mankind. They think that the fruits, and other produce of the earth, the seasons, the variety of weather, and the change of climates, by which all the produc-

were persuaded that mankind received advantage by prayers, or any offerings to the gods, they would not have endeavoured to explode those offices. Therefore our great author is here more lavish of his eloquence than the argument requires. The Epicureans were very irrational in their principles of creation; but they were not the only persons who thought prayer and sacrifices unnecessary and absurd; for many wise and good men in all ages were, and some now are, of the same opinion. Thanksgivings, indeed, for the benefits we received of his providence in this system of creation, are necessary; they are indications of a grateful mind, and preserve a purity of manners in us, by keeping the Deity, who is all perfection, in our minds.

[g] Faith, society, justice, (which are almost synonymous,) and all human virtues, are immutable, abstracted from any consideration of a Deity. Cicero therefore very well says, *haud scio*, for no man that thinks rightly of moral truths, will say that justice would be destroyed, even if there was no such being as God. Yet, so depraved are most men, I do not know, as Tully says, whether the majority of mankind would pay any regard to justice, if they were not awed by some penalty. But, however the weaker part of mankind may be influenced by hopes and fears of futurity, right and wrong exist in the nature of things, and are immutable; as the earl of Shaftesbury beautifully endeavours to demonstrate to mankind through his writings.

[h] The reader must observe, that by *fides*, which I here translate *faith*, Cicero means that confidence or trust which one man reposes in another.

tions of the earth are brought to maturity, are designed by the immortal gods for the use of man. They instance many other things, which shall be related in these books; and which are of such a nature, that they seem calculated by the divine beings for our benefit.

Against these opinions Carneades[i] has advanced so much, that what he has said should excite a desire in men, who are not naturally slothful, to search after truth; for there is nothing in which the learned, as well as the unlearned, differ so strenuously as in this; and since their opinions are so various, and so repugnant one to another, it is possible that none of them may be right, and absolutely impossible that more than one should. In this case I may be able to pacify well-meaning opposers, and to confute invidious censurers; that the latter may repent of their unreasonable contradiction, and the former be glad to learn; for they who object as friends are to be instructed; they who pursue as enemies are to be repelled. I observe that the several books which I have lately published[k] have occasioned much noise, and various discourse about them; some being surprised that I should turn myself so suddenly to the study of philosophy, and others desirous of knowing what I can discover on such subjects. I likewise perceive that many wonder

[i] Diogenes Laertius tells us, that Carneades, who was of Cyrene, left nothing behind him but some epistles to Ariarathes king of Cappadocia; what else were in his name, he says, were wrote by his scholars. Diogenes gives him an extraordinary character, and says he was well read in the writings of the Stoics. Tully mentions him afterwards as a reviver, or rather assertor, of the Academic manner of disputing.

[k] Tully wrote his philosophical works in the last three years of his life. When he wrote this piece he was in the sixty-third year of his age, in the year of Rome 709.

at my fixing on that philosophy[1] chiefly, which seems to extinguish, or cloud things in a sort of night; and that I should so unexpectedly patronise a discipline that has been long neglected and forsaken.

But I did not suddenly enter on this study. I have applied myself to it from my youth, at no small expense of time and trouble; and I then philosophised most, when I least seemed to think about it; of which my orations are instances, containing sentences of philosophers; and my conversation with the learned, who remarkably frequented our house; particularly Diodorus, Philo, Antiochus, and Posidonius[m], under whom I was bred; and, if all the precepts of our philosophy are to have reference to the conduct of life, I am inclined to think that what I have advanced, both in public and private affairs, may be supported by reason and authority. If any one should ask what induced me, in the decline of life, to write on these subjects, there is nothing I can so easily answer; for, being entirely disengaged from business, and the commonwealth reduced to the necessity of being governed by the direction and care of one man[n], I thought it necessary, for the sake of the public, to instruct our countrymen in philosophy: and that it would be of importance, and much to the honour and commendation of our city, to have such great and excellent subjects introduced in the Latin tongue. I the less repent of my

[1] The Academic. Our author soon answers these objections, as he does the rumours, which he here mentions, concerning his writings.

[m] Diodorus and Posidonius were Stoics; Philo and Antiochus were Academics; but the latter afterwards inclined to the doctrine of the Stoics.

[n] Julius Cæsar, whose usurpation, after the defeat of Pompey, seems never to have been absent from Cicero's mind. This is not the only work in which he mentions it; he speaks very feelingly of it in his Offices.

undertaking, since I plainly see that I have excited in many a desire not only of learning but of writing; for we had several Romans well grounded in the learning of the Greeks, who were unable to communicate to their countrymen what they had learned, because they looked upon it as impossible to have that expressed in Latin which they had received in Greek. In this point I think I have succeeded so well, that what I have done is not, even in copiousness of expression, inferior to that language. Another inducement to it was a melancholy disposition of mind[o], and the great and heavy oppression of fortune that was upon me; for which, if I could have found any surer remedy, I would not have sought a refuge chiefly in this. I could procure ease by no means better than by not only applying myself to books, but by exploring the whole body of philosophy. Every part and branch of it is readily discovered, when every question is propounded in writing; for there is such an admirable continuation and series of things, whose dependencies hang one on another, that they seem all connected and linked together. They who desire to know what I think on every particular head, have more curiosity than is necessary. The force of reason in disputation is rather to be sought after than authority; for the authority of the teacher is often a disadvantage to those who are willing to learn; as they refuse to use their own judgment, and rely implicitly on him they make choice of for a preceptor. Nor could I ever approve this custom of

[o] To the usurpation of Julius Cæsar, and the change of fortune, Cicero adds the death of his wife Tullia as an occasion of grief in him, which he complains of in his Academical Questions.

the Pythagoreans, who, when they affirmed anything in disputation, and were asked why it is so, used to give this answer, 'he himself has said it;' and in this case 'he himself' was Pythagoras. Such was the prejudice of opinion, that authority served instead of reason.

They who wonder at my being a follower of this sect[p] in particular, may find a satisfactory answer in my four books of Academical Questions; and that I have not undertaken the protection of what is neglected and forsaken; for the opinions of men do not die with them, but may perhaps want the author's explanation. As this manner of philosophising, of disputing all things and affirming nothing certainly, was begun by Socrates, revived by Arcesilaus, and confirmed by Carneades, so it hath come in its full force to our present age; but I am informed that it is now almost exploded even in Greece. However, I do not impute that to any fault in the institution of the Academy, but to the negligence of mankind. If it be difficult to know all the doctrines of any one sect, how much more is it to know those of every sect[q]; which it must necessarily be to those who solve, for the sake of discovering truth, to dispute for or against all philosophers without partiality? I do not profess myself master of this difficult and noble faculty, but I value myself for pursuing it; and it is impossible that they, who choose this manner of philosophising, should meet nothing worthy their pursuit. I have spoken more fully on this head in another

[p] The Academic.

[q] Cicero says this in commendation of the method of the Academics, who in their disputations opposed one doctrine to another, to see which would best bear examination.

place[r]. But as some are too slow of apprehension, and some too heedless, they want frequently to be cautioned; therefore I assure them we do not assert that nothing has the appearance of truth; but we say that some falsehoods are so blended with all truths[s], and have so great a resemblance to them, that there is no certain rule of judging and assenting; on which is founded this tenet, that many things are probable, which, though they are not evident, have so persuasive and beautiful an aspect that a wise man chooses to direct his conduct by them.

Now, to free myself from the reproach of partiality, I will publish the sentiments of philosophers concerning the nature of the gods, by which means all men may judge which of them are consistent with truth; and if all agree upon, or any one shall be found to have discovered what is, truth, I will look upon the Academy as arrogant. So I may cry out, in the words of the poet[t] in his Twins;

[r] In his Academical Questions, which are mutilated in many places. But though they are not perfect, yet he has said a great deal on the method of the Academics, which is still remaining in those books.

[s] If our great author had said *multis*, instead of *omnibus veris*, he had been right; but all truths are not blended with falsehoods. The relations in which we stand to one another, as constituted into any particular society, or as rational creatures, and all moral truths, are as certain as arithmetical truths; and, if nothing but arithmetical truths were certain, it is wrong to assert that all truths are blended with falsehoods.

[t] In most editions, Statius is here named (*ut Statius in Synephebis*). Some read *ut Plautus*, and some *ut Terentius*. But neither Plautus nor Terence wrote a comedy with that title; though the Menæchmi of Plautus would admit of it. Dr. Davis rejects the poet's name in the text, on the authority of the best manuscript copies. There are passages in Plautus and Terence similar to this exclamation; but Cicero certainly quoted it from Cæcilius Statius, who wrote a comedy with that title, which is now lost.

Ye gods, I call upon, require, pray, beseech, entreat, and implore the attention of my countrymen all, both young and old;

yet not on so trifling an occasion, as when the person in the play complains that,

In this city we have discovered a most flagrant iniquity; here is a *professed courtesan* who refuses money from her gallant;

but that they may attend, know, and consider what sentiments they ought to preserve concerning religion, piety, sanctity, ceremonies, faith, oaths, temples, shrines, and solemn sacrifices; and what concerning the auspices over which I preside; for all these have relation to the present question. The manifest disagreement amongst the most learned on this subject creates doubts in those who imagine they have something of certainty; which, as I have often taken notice of elsewhere, so I did more especially at the careful and accurate dispute that was held at my friend C. Cotta's, concerning the immortal gods; for coming to him at the time of the Latin festivals[u], according to his own invitation and message from him, I found him sitting in his study[x], and in a discourse with C. Velleius the senator, who was then reputed by the Epicureans the ablest of our countrymen. Q. Lucilius Balbus was likewise there, a great proficient in the doctrine of the Stoics, and esteemed equal to the most eminent of the Greeks in that part of knowledge. As soon as Cotta saw me, you are come, says he, very seasonably; for I have a dispute with Velleius on an im-

[u] The Feriæ Latinæ were celebrated on the last of March, on the hill Albanus, where the Latins then offered sacrifices to Jupiter of Latium; for which reason they were called Feriæ Latinæ.

[x] *Exhedra*, the word here used by Cicero, means a study, or place where disputes were held.

portant subject, which, considering the nature of your studies, is not improper for you to join in. Indeed, says I, I think I am come very seasonably, as you say; for here are three chiefs of three principal sects met together. If M. Piso[y] was present, no sect of philosophy that is in any esteem would want an advocate. If Antiochus's book, replies Cotta, which he lately sent to Balbus, says true, you have no occasion to wish for your friend Piso; for Antiochus is of the opinion, that the Stoics do not differ from the Peripatetics in fact, though they do in words. I should be glad to know what you think of that book, Balbus? I? says he. I wonder that Antiochus, a man of the clearest apprehension, should not see what a vast difference there is between the Stoics[z], who distinguish the honest and the profitable, not only in name but absolutely in kind; and the Peripatetics, who blend the honest with the profitable in such a manner, that they differ only in degrees and proportion, and not in kind. This is not a little difference in words, but a great one in things: but of this hereafter. Now, if you think fit, let us re- פ ו

[y] M. Piso was a Peripatetic. The four great sects were the Stoics, the Peripatetics, the Academics, and the Epicureans.

[z] However Cicero makes Balbus represent the distinction which the Stoics made between the honest and the profitable, virtue was always esteemed by them the only good; according to which the honest and the profitable are inseparable. Cicero says, in the third book of his Offices, *quod summum bonum a Stoicis dicitur, convenienter naturæ vivere, id habet hanc, ut opinor, sententiam, cum virtute congruere semper.* What the Stoics call the chief good, which is to live agreeably to nature, has, I think, this meaning in it, to act always consistent with virtue; and this passage of Cicero is almost a translation from Zeno's treatise on the Nature of Man; the original of which is preserved in Diogenes Laertius. Tully, in the same book of his Offices, says the Stoics make *honestum* the *solum bonum*, and that the Peripatetics make it the *summum bonum*; which difference is more in words than in fact.

turn to what we began with. With all my heart, says Cotta. But that this visiter, (looking at me,) who is just come in, may not be ignorant of what we are upon, I will inform him that we were discoursing on the nature of the gods; concerning which, as it is a subject that always appeared very obscure to me, I prevailed on Velleius to give us the sentiments of Epicurus. Therefore, continues he, if it is not troublesome, Velleius, repeat what you before delivered. I will, says he; though this person will be no advocate for me, but for you; for you have both, adds he with a smile, learned from the same Philo to be certain of nothing[a]. What we have learned from him, replied I, Cotta will discover; but I would not have you think I am come as an assistant to him, but as an auditor, with an impartial and unbiassed mind, and under no necessity to defend any particular principle.

After this Velleius, with the confidence peculiar to his sect, dreading nothing so much as to seem to doubt of anything, began as if he had just then descended from the council of the gods, and Epicurus's intervals[b] of worlds. Attend, says he, to no idle and invented tales; not to the operator and builder of the world, the god of Plato's Timæus; nor to the old prophetic dame, the Πρόνοια of the Stoics, which the Latins call Provi-

[a] It was a prevailing tenet of the Academics, that there is no certain knowledge. *Academici novam induxerunt scientiam, nihil scire,* says Seneca in one of his epistles. The Academics have introduced a new science, to know nothing. *Novam scientiam, nihil scire,* is not bad ridicule.

[b] The Epicureans maintained the doctrine of plurality of worlds with vacant spaces, intervals, between them. There is no doctrine more consistent with reason than this, when we consider the infinity of space, the immense quantity of matter in space, and the power of God. There is scarcely anything more absurd than to imagine that there should be but one world.

dence; nor to that round, that burning, voluble deity, the world, endowed with sense and understanding[c]; the prodigies and wonders, not of inquisitive philosophers, but of dreamers! For with what eyes of the mind was your Plato able to see that workhouse of such stupendous toil, in which he makes the world to be modelled and built by God? What materials, what tools, what bars, what machines, what servants, were employed in so vast a work? How could the air, fire, water, and earth, pay obedience and submit to the will of the architect? From whence arose those five forms[d], of which the rest were composed, so aptly contributing to frame the mind, and produce the senses? It is tedious to go through all, as they are of such a sort, that they look more like things to be desired, than to be discovered. But what is most remarkable, he gives us a world not only made, but in a manner formed with hands, and yet says it is eternal. Do you conceive him to have the least skill in natural philosophy who is capable of thinking anything to be everlasting that had a beginning? For what is there in the composition that is not dissoluble? or what is there that had a beginning which will not have an end?

[c] This opinion of the world being endowed with understanding was advanced both by Plato and the Stoics.

[d] The five forms of Plato are whimsies unbecoming a philosopher. They are these, *οὐσία*, *ταὐτὸν*, *ἕτερον*, *στάσις*, *κίνησις*. The general interpretation of which is; *οὐσία*, the principal essence; *ταὐτὸν*, the same, regarding the relation it bears to itself and other things; *ἕτερον*, the other, when one thing varies or differs from another; *στάσις*, while it keeps its station, or preserves a unity; *κίνησις*, motion, or that by which it exerts a power to act. Platonic trifles! A farther explanation of this unphilosophical stuff would not in the least illustrate this passage of our author; and hereafter, where Cicero does not leave those doctrines of the several sects difficult to be understood, I shall not give the reader or myself the trouble of a note.

If your Providence, Lucilius, is the same as Plato's God; I ask you, as before, what were the assistants, the engines? what the plan and preparation of the whole work? If it is not the same, why did she make the world mortal, and not everlasting, like Plato's God? Now I would demand of you both, why these world-builders started up so suddenly, and lay dormant so many ages? for we are not to conclude, that if there was no world, there were no ages. I do not now speak of such ages as are finished by a certain number of days and nights in annual courses; for I acknowledge that those could not be without the revolution of the world; but there was a certain eternity from infinite time, not measured by any circumscription of seasons; but how that was in space[e] we cannot understand; because we can have no idea of time before time was. I desire, therefore, to know, Balbus, why your Providence was idle for such an immense space of time? Did she avoid labour? but that could have no effect on the Deity; nor could there be any labour; since all nature, air, fire, earth, and water, would obey the Divine Essence. What was it that incited the Deity to act the part of an ædile[f], to illuminate and decorate

[e] Velleius is here to be understood as speaking of infinite space, unoccupied by any worlds, and without any divisions of time, as appears by what follows.

[f] There were two ædiles in Rome, who were always persons of distinction; one was a patrician, though at first they were both chose out of the commons. Their office was to take care of the temples and other public buildings; from whence they were called ædiles. They had likewise the direction of public entertainments, shows, decorations, etc. Velleius, the reader must observe, attacks the other sects with an air of ridicule; and his raillery is sometimes, though not always, just. Velleius afterwards declaims against the doctrines of several philosophers, without proving anything.

the world? If it was because God might be the better accommodated in his habitation, why did he dwell such an infinite length of time before in darkness, as in a dungeon? Do we imagine that he could afterwards be delighted with that variety with which we see the heaven and earth adorned? What entertainment could that be to the Deity? If it was any, he would not have been without it so long; or were these things made, as you almost assert, by God, for the sake of men? Was it for the wise? If so, this great design was for very few. Or for the sake of fools? First, there was no reason that he should consult the advantage of the wicked[g]; and farther, what could he propose, since all fools are, without doubt, the most miserable, chiefly because they are fools? for can we name anything more deplorable than folly? Besides, there are so many inconveniencies in life which the wise can soften by their consideration of the advantages they receive; but fools are unable to avoid them when they are coming, nor can they bear them when they are come. They who affirm the world to be an animated and intelligent being, have by no means discovered the nature of the mind, nor are able to conceive in what form that essence can exist; but of that I shall speak more hereafter. At present, I must express my surprise at the weakness of those who will not only have it to be animated and immortal, but likewise happy and round, because Plato says that is the most beautiful form; whereas I think a cylinder, a square, a cone, or a pyramid, more beautiful. But what life do they attribute

[g] Fools and the wicked are synonymous in philosophic language. To be guilty of wickedness is to act against reason; and to act against reason is folly.

to that round deity? Truly it is a being whirled about with a celerity that imagination cannot reach; nor can I conceive how a settled mind and happy life can consist in such motion, the least degree of which would be troublesome to us. Why, therefore, is it not so to the Deity? The earth, as it is part of the world, is part of the Deity. We see vast tracts of land uninhabitable and barren; some, because they are scorched by the too near approach of the sun; others, because they are bound up with frost and snow, through the great distance of it. Therefore, if the world is a Deity, as these are parts of the world, some of the Deity's limbs may be said to be scorched, and some frozen. These are your doctrines, Lucilius; what those of others are I will search from the earliest[h] of ancient philosophers.

[h] The words in the original are, *qualia vero alia ab* ultimo *repetum superiorum;* and our author begins immediately with Thales the Milesian; from which it is plain that, by *ab ultimo superiorum,* Cicero means *ab antiquorum philosophorum vetustissimo,* from the most ancient of ancient philosophers, or the earliest; and in this sense Dr. Davis and other good critics take it; in the same sense Cicero uses this adjective towards the beginning of his first book de Divinatione: his words are these, *Principio* Assyrii, *ut ab* ultimis *auctoritatem repetam;* naming the Assyrians, that I may produce, says he, the oldest authority. I have not been so nice on this adjective for the sake of explaining this passage in Tully, but to show that the general construction of the word *ultima* in the following verse of Virgil is wrong;

Ultima *Cumæi* venit jam carminis ætas;

the common explanation of which is, that the last age foretold by the Cumæan sibyl is now come. This is said to be prophetic of the birth of Christ; though it is evident that Virgil applied it to the birth of Pollio's son, as a compliment to his friend and patron. But if such a sibylline prophecy was fulfilled in Christ, yet these words of Virgil will admit of no such construction; *ultima* is used here for *vetustissima,* as *ultimo* and *ultimis* are used by Cicero for *vetustissimo* and *vetustissimis;* then the sense of the verse is this, the oldest age (that is, the most remote from us) mentioned by the Cumæan poet, Hesiod, is come again; and the next two verses in this eclogue of Virgil explain the foregoing verse. Let us read them together:

Thales the Milesian, who first inquired after such subjects, asserted water to be the origin of things; and that God was that mind which formed all things from water. If the gods can exist without corporeal sense[i], and if there can be a mind without a body, why did he annex a mind to water?

It was Anaximander's opinion that the gods were born; that after a great length of time they died; and that they are innumerable worlds[k]. But what conception can we have of a Deity not eternal?

Anaximenes, after him, taught that the air is God; that he was generated; and that he is immense, infinite, and always in motion; but could air, which hath no form, be God? for the Deity must necessarily be

> Ultima *Cumæi* venit jam carminis ætas,
> Magnus ab integro seclorum nascitur ordo;
> Jam redit et virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna.

The oldest age, mentioned by the Cumæan poet, is come again; the great order, or round of ages, arises anew; the virgin, Justice, returns again, and the Saturnian age revives. All this is agreeable to the first age described by Hesiod, which is the Saturnian age; and in the same sense Virgil uses the word *ultimus* in the seventh book of his Æneis, verse 48.

> ——————— ———isque parentem
> Te, Saturne, refert; tu sanguinis *ultimus* auctor.

You, Saturn, he reports his father, you the *oldest* author of his blood. I am not peculiar in applying this passage of Virgil to the first or oldest age, mentioned by Hesiod; many learned men have done the same, as may be seen in Fabricius's Bibliotheca Græca, and in other books. But I believe I have as justly settled the sense here as it has been in any other place.

[i] The general reading of this passage is nonsense. I follow Lambinus in my construction.

[k] The common, and I doubt not but the right, reading is, *eosque innumerabiles esse mundos*. Some copies have not the word *mundos*; but it appears, as Dr. Davis observes, from Cyril against Julian, and from other authors, that Anaximander thought the Deity to be contained in infinite worlds.

not only of some form, but the most beautiful; besides, is not everything that had a beginning subject to mortality?

Anaxagoras, who received his learning from Anaximenes, was the first[1] who affirmed the system and disposition of all things to be contrived and perfected by the power and reason of an infinite mind; in which infinity he did not perceive that there could be no conjunction of sense and motion, nor any sense in the least degree where Nature herself could feel no impulse. If he would have this mind to be a sort of animal, there must be some more internal principle from whence that animal should receive its appellation. But what can be more internal than the mind? Therefore it is clothed with an external body. But this is not agreeable to his doctrine; and we are unable to conceive how a naked pure mind can exist without any substance annexed to it.

Alcmæo of Croton, in attributing a divinity to the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, and also to the mind, did not perceive that he ascribed immortality to mortal beings. Pythagoras, who supposed the Deity to be one soul, mixing with and pervading all nature, from which our souls are taken, did not consider that the Deity himself must be maimed and torn with the

[1] Why the first? as Dr. Davis says. Thales is but just before said to have asserted that God was that mind which formed all things from water. Lescaloperius, as the same critic observes, thinks Anaxagoras was the first who published anything on that subject; but that will not reconcile it. Augustine, in his de Civitate Dei, says that Thales committed his disputations to writing. Dr. Davis endeavours to clear it up, by making this distinction between the God of Thales and the God of Anaxagoras; the first is without motion, as Stobæus, Plutarch, and Cyril against Justin, represent him; but Anaxagoras's God is, according to Lactantius, an infinite mind, to which motion is essential.

rending every human soul from it; nor that, when the human mind is afflicted, (as it often is) part of the Deity must likewise be afflicted, which cannot be. If the human mind was a Deity, how could it be ignorant of anything. Besides, how could that Deity, if it is nothing but soul, be mixed with, or infused into, the world.

Xenophanes, who would have all parts of the universe to be infinite and possessed of a mind, and who said that was God, is as liable to exception as the rest, especially in relation to the infinity of it, in which there can be no sensible conjunction.

Parmenides formed a conceit to himself of something circular like a crown. He names it Stephane[m]. It is an orb of constant light and heat around the heavens; this he calls God, in which there is no room to imagine any divine form or sense. Many more are his absurdities; for he ascribed a divinity[n] to war, to discord, to lust, and other passions of the same kind; which diseases, sleep, oblivion, or age, destroy. The same honour he gives to the stars; but I shall here forbear making any objections to that point, having already done it in another place.

Empedocles, who erred in many things, is most grossly mistaken in his notion of the gods. He lays down four[o] natures as divine, from which he thinks all

[m] Plutarch mentions the *στεφάνα*, or circle, of Parmenides.

[n] None of the commentators tell us from whence Cicero had these opinions of Parmenides. Neither Diogenes Laertius nor other authors, who have preserved the fragments of ancient philosophers, mention them; but we read in Plato's Banquet that Parmenides, like Hesiod, deified war, discord, etc.

[o] The four natures here to be understood are the four elements, fire, water, air, and earth; which are mentioned as the four principles of Empedocles by Diogenes Laertius.

things were made. Yet it is evident that they have a beginning, that they decay, and that they are void of all sense.

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Zeno (to come to your sect, Balbus,) thinks the law of nature to be the Divinity; and that it hath the power to enforce us to what is right, and to restrain us from what is wrong. How this law can be an animated being I cannot conceive, but that God is so we would certainly maintain. The same person says, in another place, that the sky is God; but can we possibly conceive that God is a being insensible; deaf to our prayers, our wishes, and our vows? In other books he thinks there is a certain rational essence, pervading all nature, endued with divine efficacy. He attributes the same power to the stars, to the years, to the months, and to the seasons. In his interpretation of Hesiod's Theogony[a], he entirely destroys the established notions of the gods; for he excludes Jupiter, Juno, and Vesta, and those esteemed divine, from the number of them; but his doctrine is, that these are names which, by a sort of allusion, are given to mute and inanimate beings.

The sentiments of his disciple Aristo are not less erroneous. He thought it impossible to conceive the form of the Deity. He says the gods are without sense; and he is entirely dubious whether the Deity is an animated being or not.

[a] Or, Generation of the Gods.

Cleanthes, who next comes under my notice, a disciple of Zeno with Aristo, one while says the world is God, at other times he attributes divinity to the mind and spirit of universal nature; then he asserts, that the most remote, the highest, the all-surrounding, the all-enclosing, and embracing heat, which is called the sky, is most certainly the Deity. In the books he wrote against pleasure, in which he seems to be doating, he imagines the gods to have a certain form and shape; then he ascribes all divinity to the stars; and lastly, he thinks nothing more divine than reason. So that this God, whom we know mentally and in speculation, from which traces we receive our impression, has no appearance at last.

Persæus, another disciple of Zeno, says that they who have made discoveries advantageous to the life of man, should be esteemed as gods; and the very things, he says, which are healthful and beneficial, should have divine appellations; so that he thinks it not sufficient to call them the discoveries of gods, but they themselves must be deemed divine. What can be more absurd than to ascribe divine honours to sordid and deformed things; or to place among the gods such men as are dead, and mixed with the dust; to whose memory no respect is required but mourning?

Chrysippus, who is looked upon as the most subtle interpreter of the dreams of the Stoics, has mustered up a numerous band of unknown gods; and so unknown, that we are not able to form any idea about them, though our minds seem capable of framing any image. He says that the divine efficacy is placed in reason, and in the spirit and mind of universal nature; that the world, with an universal effusion of its spirit,

is God; that the superior part of that spirit, which is the mind and reason, is the great principle of nature, containing and preserving the chain of all things; that the divinity is the power of fate, and the necessity of future events. He deifies fire also, and what I before called the sky, and those elements which naturally proceed from it, water, earth, and air. He gives divinity to the sun, moon, stars, and universal space, the grand capacity of all things; and to those men likewise who have obtained immortality[t]. He maintains the sky to be what men call Jupiter; the air, which pervades the sea, to be Neptune; and the earth, Ceres. In like manner he applies the names of the other deities. He says that Jupiter is that immutable and eternal law, which guides and directs us in our manners; and this he calls fatal necessity, the everlasting verity of future events. But none of all these seem to carry any indication of divine virtue in them. These are the doctrines contained in his first book of the Nature of the Gods. In the second he endeavours to accommodate the fables of Orpheus, Musæus, Hesiod, and Homer, to what he hath advanced in the first; that the most ancient poets, who never thought of these things, may seem to have been Stoics.

Diogenes, the Babylonian, was a follower of the doctrine of Chrysippus; and in that book he wrote, entitled, concerning Minerva, he separates the account of Jupiter's bringing forth, and the birth of that virgin[u], from the fabulous, and reduces it to a natural construction.

[t] Such as have been declared immortal, he means, by the suffrage of the people, or by the law.

[u] Minerva, who in the fable is said to have sprung from the head of

I have hitherto rather exposed the dreams of dotards than given the opinions of philosophers. The tales of the poets, whose sweetness of language makes them noxious, are not much more absurd; who have introduced the gods enraged with anger and inflamed with lust; and have described their wars, their battles, combats, and their wounds; their hatreds, dissensions, discords, births, deaths, complaints, and lamentations; their indulgences in all kinds of intemperance; their adulteries, their chains, their amours with mortals, and mortals begotten by immortals. To these erroneous flights of the poets may be added the prodigies of the magi, the same extravagances of the Egyptians, and the prejudices of the vulgar, which, through their ignorance of truth, are in the greatest uncertainty.

Whoever thinks how rashly and inconsiderately these tenets are advanced must entertain a veneration for Epicurus, and rank him in the number of those beings who are the subject of this dispute; for he alone first founded the existence of the gods[x] on the impression which nature herself hath made on the minds of all men. For what nation, what people are there, who have not,

Jupiter, which the mythologists interpret thus: Jupiter signifies the supreme power, and Minerva wisdom; so that wisdom is said to spring from the mind of the supreme power. This is not lord Bacon's interpretation only, in his treatise on the Wisdom of the Ancients, but the explanation of several of the ancients; and this doubtless is the physiological, or natural, interpretation of Diogenes, which Velleius here censures.

[x] The words of Tully are, *solus enim vidit primum esse Deos, quod in omnium animis eorum notionem inpressisset ipsa natura*, which are not entirely free from ambiguity, though an accurate person cannot mistake them. The meaning is, that Epicurus first discovered the existence of the gods, from his observation, that nature has impressed that notion in the minds of all, previous to any instruction; so that he first discovered this universal impression to be a certain indication of the being of the gods.

without any learning, a natural idea, or pre-notion of a deity. Epicurus calls this προλήψιν [y]; that is, an antecedent information of the fact in the mind, without which nothing can be understood, inquired after, or discoursed upon; the force and advantage of which reasoning we receive from that celestial volume of Epicurus, concerning the Rule and Judgment [z].

Here you see the foundation of this question clearly laid; for since it is the constant and universal opinion of mankind, independent of education, custom, or law, that there are gods, it must necessarily follow that this knowledge is implanted in our minds, or rather innate in us. That to which there is a general agreement through nature, must infallibly be true; therefore it must be allowed that there are gods; for in this we have the concurrence not only of almost all philosophers, but likewise of the illiterate. It must be also confessed that we have naturally this idea, as I said before, or pre-notion of the existence of the gods. As new things require new names, so that pre-notion was called πρόληψις by Epicurus; an appellation never used before. On the same principle of reasoning we think

[y] By πρόληψις we are to understand an innate notion of the Deity implanted in our minds, as it is explained here by Velleius; and agreeable to which is the explanation we find of it in Diogenes Laertius's life of Epicurus. It is an anticipation (which is the literal meaning of the word) of those ideas which would flow in from external appearances. How inconsistent this doctrine is with true philosophy every one knows, who maturely considers the nature of our ideas, and how they are conveyed to our minds by our senses. A doctrine that Mr. Locke was very successful in advancing, though too prolix.

[z] Diogenes Laertius calls this treatise, περὶ Κριτήριον ἢ Κανών, that is, concerning the Judgment or the Rule. Cicero makes Velleius call it *cœleste volumen*, not only because of the great value which that sect prized it at, but because the Epicureans said the book fell from heaven.

the gods are happy and immortal; for that nature, which hath assured us there are gods, hath likewise imprinted in our minds the knowledge of their immortality and felicity; and if so, what Epicurus hath declared, in these words, is true; that which is eternally happy, cannot be burthened with any labour itself, or impose any on another; nor can it be influenced by resentment or favour, because such beings must be weak and frail[a]. We have said enough to prove that we should worship the gods with piety, and without superstition, if that was the only question. The superior and excellent nature of the gods requires a pious adoration from men, because it is possessed of immortality and the most exalted felicity; for whatever excels has a right to veneration; and all fear of the power and anger of the gods should be banished; for anger and affection are inconsistent with the nature of an happy and immortal being. These apprehensions being removed, no dread of the superior powers remains. To confirm this opinion, our curiosity leads us to inquire into the form, the life, and action, of the spirit of the Deity.

With regard to his form, we are directed partly by nature, and partly by reason. All men are told by nature that none but a human form can be ascribed to the gods; for under what other image did it ever appear to any one either sleeping or waking? and, without having recourse to our first notions[b]; reason itself

[a] The original passage of this is quoted by Diogenes Laertius from Epicurus, and by Eustathius on the last book of Homer's Iliad.

[b] The προλήψις of Epicurus, before mentioned, is what he here means. He distinguishes it, but falsely, from reason, as previous to all the ideas which are conveyed to the mind through the senses.

declares the same; for as it is easy to conceive that the most excellent nature, either because of its happiness or immortality, should be the most beautiful, what composition of limbs, what conformity of lineaments, what form, what aspect, can be more beautiful than the human? Your sect[c], Lucilius, (not like my friend Cotta, who is sometimes for and sometimes against) when they represent the divine art and workmanship in the human body, are used to describe not only the conveniency but the beauty of it. Therefore if the human form excels all animals, as God himself is animated, he must surely be of that form which is the most beautiful. Besides, the gods are granted to be perfectly happy; and nobody can be happy without virtue, nor can virtue exist where reason is not; and reason can reside in none but the human form; the gods therefore must be acknowledged to be of human form; yet that form is not body, but as if it was body; nor does it contain any blood, but something as if it was blood[d]. Though these distinctions were more acutely devised, and more artfully expressed, by Epicurus than any common capacity can conceive; yet, depending on your understanding, I am shorter on the subject than otherwise I should be.

Epicurus, who not only discovered the occult and almost hidden secrets of nature, but explained them with ease, teaches that the power and nature of the gods are not to be discerned by the senses, but by the mind; nor are they to be considered as bodies of any solidity, or reduceable to number, like those things

[c] The Stoics.

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Zeno (to come to your sect, Balbus,) thinks the law of nature to be the Divinity; and that it hath the power to enforce us to what is right, and to restrain us from what is wrong. How this law can be an animated being I cannot conceive, but that God is so we would certainly maintain. The same person says, in another place, that the sky is God; but can we possibly conceive that God is a being insensible; deaf to our prayers, our wishes, and our vows? In other books he thinks there is a certain rational essence, pervading all nature, endued with divine efficacy. He attributes the same power to the stars, to the years, to the months, and to the seasons. In his interpretation of Hesiod's Theogony[a], he entirely destroys the established notions of the gods; for he excludes Jupiter, Juno, and Vesta, and those esteemed divine, from the number of them; but his doctrine is, that these are names which, by a sort of allusion, are given to mute and inanimate beings.

The sentiments of his disciple Aristo are not less erroneous. He thought it impossible to conceive the form of the Deity. He says the gods are without sense; and he is entirely dubious whether the Deity is an animated being or not.

[a] Or, Generation of the Gods.

Cleanthes, who next comes under my notice, a disciple of Zeno with Aristo, one while says the world is God, at other times he attributes divinity to the mind and spirit of universal nature; then he asserts, that the most remote, the highest, the all-surrounding, the all-enclosing, and embracing heat, which is called the sky, is most certainly the Deity. In the books he wrote against pleasure, in which he seems to be doating, he imagines the gods to have a certain form and shape; then he ascribes all divinity to the stars; and lastly, he thinks nothing more divine than reason. So that this God, whom we know mentally and in speculation, from which traces we receive our impression, has no appearance at last.

Persæus, another disciple of Zeno, says that they who have made discoveries advantageous to the life of man, should be esteemed as gods; and the very things, he says, which are healthful and beneficial, should have divine appellations; so that he thinks it not sufficient to call them the discoveries of gods, but they themselves must be deemed divine. What can be more absurd than to ascribe divine honours to sordid and deformed things; or to place among the gods such men as are dead, and mixed with the dust; to whose memory no respect is required but mourning?

Chrysippus, who is looked upon as the most subtle interpreter of the dreams of the Stoics, has mustered up a numerous band of unknown gods; and so unknown, that we are not able to form any idea about them, though our minds seem capable of framing any image. He says that the divine efficacy is placed in reason, and in the spirit and mind of universal nature; that the world, with an universal effusion of its spirit,

particular; but I shall oppose the reasons you give for it, which I think are very insufficient.

You said that the general assent of men, of all nations, and all degrees, is an argument strong enough to induce us to acknowledge the being of the gods. This is not only a weak but a false argument; for first, how do you know the opinions of all nations? I really believe there are many people so savage that they have no thought of a deity. What think you of Diagoras, who was called the atheist, and of Theodorus? Did not they plainly deny the very essence of a deity? Protagoras of Abdera, whom you just now mentioned, the greatest sophist[g] of his age, was banished by order of the Athenians from their city and territories, and his books were publicly burnt, because these words were in the beginning of his treatise, "concerning the gods, I am unable to arrive at any knowledge whether there are, or are not, any." This, I imagine, restrained many from professing their disbelief of a deity; since the doubt of it only could not escape punishment. What shall we say of the sacrilegious, the impious, and the perjured? If Tubulus, Lucius, Lupus, or Carbo the son of Neptune[h], as Lucilius says, had

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Whoever thinks how rashly and inconsiderately these tenets are advanced must entertain a veneration for Epicurus, and rank him in the number of those beings who are the subject of this dispute; for he alone first founded the existence of the gods[x] on the impression which nature herself hath made on the minds of all men. For what nation, what people are there, who have not,

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Here you see the foundation of this question clearly laid; for since it is the constant and universal opinion of mankind, independent of education, custom, or law, that there are gods, it must necessarily follow that this knowledge is implanted in our minds, or rather innate in us. That to which there is a general agreement through nature, must infallibly be true; therefore it must be allowed that there are gods; for in this we have the concurrence not only of almost all philosophers, but likewise of the illiterate. It must be also confessed that we have naturally this idea, as I said before, or pre-notion of the existence of the gods. As new things require new names, so that pre-notion was called πρόληψις by Epicurus; an appellation never used before. | On the same principle of reasoning we think

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the gods are happy and immortal; for that nature, which hath assured us there are gods, hath likewise imprinted in our minds the knowledge of their immortality and felicity; and if so, what Epicurus hath declared, in these words, is true; that which is eternally happy, cannot be burthened with any labour itself, or impose any on another; nor can it be influenced by resentment or favour, because such beings must be weak and frail[a]. We have said enough to prove that we should worship the gods with piety, and without superstition, if that was the only question. The superior and excellent nature of the gods requires a pious adoration from men, because it is possessed of immortality and the most exalted felicity; for whatever excels has a right to veneration; and all fear of the power and anger of the gods should be banished; for anger and affection are inconsistent with the nature of an happy and immortal being. These apprehensions being removed, no dread of the superior powers remains. To confirm this opinion, our curiosity leads us to inquire into the form, the life, and action, of the spirit of the Deity.

With regard to his form, we are directed partly by nature, and partly by reason. All men are told by nature that none but a human form can be ascribed to the gods; for under what other image did it ever appear to any one either sleeping or waking? and, without having recourse to our first notions[b], reason itself

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declares the same; for as it is easy to conceive that the most excellent nature, either because of its happiness or immortality, should be the most beautiful, what composition of limbs, what conformity of lineaments, what form, what aspect, can be more beautiful than the human? Your sect[c], Lucilius, (not like my friend Cotta, who is sometimes for and sometimes against) when they represent the divine art and workmanship in the human body, are used to describe not only the conveniency but the beauty of it. Therefore if the human form excels all animals, as God himself is animated, he must surely be of that form which is the most beautiful. Besides, the gods are granted to be perfectly happy; and nobody can be happy without virtue, nor can virtue exist where reason is not; and reason can reside in none but the human form; the gods therefore must be acknowledged to be of human form; yet that form is not body, but as if it was body; nor does it contain any blood, but something as if it was blood[d]. Though these distinctions were more acutely devised, and more artfully expressed, by Epicurus than any common capacity can conceive; yet, depending on your understanding, I am shorter on the subject than otherwise I should be.

Epicurus, who not only discovered the occult and almost hidden secrets of nature, but explained them with ease, teaches that the power and nature of the gods are not to be discerned by the senses, but by the mind; nor are they to be considered as bodies of any solidity, or reduceable to number, like those things

[c] The Stoics.

[d] This part of the Epicurean creed is almost as inconsistent as what we find in some creeds of the Catholics.

which, because of their firmness, he calls στερέμνια[e]; but as images, perceived by similitude and transition. As infinite kinds of those images result from innumerable individuals, and centre in the gods, our minds and understanding are intent and fixed with the greatest delight on them, in order to comprehend what that happy and eternal essence is.

The mighty power of the infinite being is most worthy our great and earnest contemplation, the nature of which we must necessarily understand to be such, that everything correspondent is made to answer. This is called by Epicurus ισονόμια; that is, an equal distribution, or even disposition of things. From hence he draws this inference; that, as there is such a vast multitude of mortals, there cannot be a less number of immortals; and if those which perish are innumerable, Those which are preserved ought also to be infinite.

Your sect, Balbus, frequently ask us how the gods live, and how they pass their time. Their life is the most happy, and the most abounding with all kinds of blessings, which can be conceived. They do nothing. They are embarrassed with no affairs, nor do they perform any work. They rejoice in the possession of their own wisdom and virtue. They are satisfied that they shall ever enjoy the fulness of eternal pleasures.

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The philosopher, from whom we received all our knowledge, hath taught us that the world was made by nature; that there was no occasion for a workhouse to frame it in; and that though you deny the possibility of such a work without divine skill, it is so easy to her, that she has made, does make, and will make, innumerable worlds. But, because you do not conceive that nature is able to produce such effects without some rational aid, you are forced, like the tragic poets[f], at a loss for a conclusion, to have recourse to a deity; whose assistance you would not seek, if you could view that vast and unbounded magnitude of regions in all parts; where the mind, extending and spreading itself, travels so far and wide that it can find no end, no extremity to stop at. In this immensity of breadth, length, and height, innumerable atoms are in agitation, and with infinite power; which, notwithstanding the interposition of a void part of space, meet and cohere, and continue clinging to one another; by this union these modifications and forms of things

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arise, which, in your opinions, could not possibly be made without the help of bellows and anvils. Thus you have imposed on us an eternal master, whom we must dread day and night. For who can be free from fear of a Deity, who foresees, regards, and animadverts on everything, one who thinks all things his own, a curious, ever-busy God?

Hence first arose your εἱμαρμένη, as you call it, your fatal necessity; so that, whatever happens, you affirm that it flows from an eternal chain and continuance of causes. Of what value is this philosophy, which, like old women and illiterate men, atrributes everything to fate?

Then follows your μαντικὴ, in Latin called *divinatio*, divination; which, if we would listen to you, would plunge us into such superstition, that we should fall down and worship your inspectors into sacrifices, your augurs, your soothsayers, your prophets, and your fortunetellers.

Epicurus having freed us from these terrors and restored us to liberty, we have no dread of those beings, whom we have reason to think entirely free from all trouble themselves, and who do not impose any on others. We pay our adoration, indeed, with piety and reverence to that essence which is above all in excellence and perfection. But I fear my zeal for this doctrine has made me too prolix. However, I could not easily leave so eminent and important a subject unfinished, though I must confess I should rather endeavour to hear than speak so long.

Cotta, with his usual courtesy, then began. Velleius, says he, was it not for what you have advanced, I should have remained silent; for I have often

observed, as I did just now upon hearing you, that I cannot so easily conceive why a proposition is true, as why it is false. Should you ask me what I take the nature of the gods to be, I should perhaps make no answer. Should you ask whether I think it as you have described it, I should answer in the negative. But, before I enter on the subject of your discourse, and what you have advanced upon it, I will give you my opinion of yourself. Your intimate friend L. Crassus has been often heard to say, that you doubtless excelled all our learned Romans; and that few Epicureans in Greece were to be compared to you. But, as I knew what a wonderful esteem he had for you, I imagined that might make him the more lavish in commendation of you. Though I do not choose to praise any one when present, yet I must confess that I think you have delivered your thoughts clearly on an obscure and very intricate subject; that you are not only copious in your sentiments, but more elegant in your language than your sect generally are.

When I was at Athens I went often to hear Zeno, by the advice of Philo, who used to call him the chief of the Epicureans. As I heard how he delivered your principles, I am inclined to think myself the more able to refute them. He did not speak as many do; but like you, distinctly, gravely, and elegantly; yet what frequently gave me great uneasiness when I heard him, as it did while I attended to you, was to see so excellent a genius falling into such frivolous (excuse my freedom), not to say foolish doctrines. However, I shall not at present offer anything better; for, as I said before, I can in most subjects, especially in physics, sooner discover what is not true than what is.

If you should ask me what God is, or what his essence, I should follow the example of Simonides, who, when Hiero the tyrant proposed the same question to him, desired a day to consider of it. When he required his answer the next day, Simonides begged two days more, and often desiring double the number, instead of giving his answer, Hiero, with surprise, asked him his meaning in doing so: "Because," says he, "the longer I meditate on it the more obscure it appears to me." Simonides, who was not only a delightful poet, but reputed a wise and learned man in other branches of knowledge, had, I suppose, so many acute and refined arguments occur to him, that he was doubtful which was the truest, and therefore despaired of discovering any truth. But does your Epicurus (for I had rather contend with him than with you) say anything that is worthy the name of philosophy, or even of common sense? In the question concerning the nature of the gods, his first inquiry is whether there are gods or not. It would be dangerous, I believe, to be on the negative part in a public auditory; but it is very safe in a discourse of this kind, and in this company. I, who am a priest, and who think that religions and ceremonies ought sacredly to be maintained, would have the existence of the gods, which is the principal point in debate, not only fixed in opinion, but proved to a demonstration; for many notions flow into and disturb the mind, which sometimes seem to convince us that there are none. But see how candidly I will behave to you, as I will not touch upon those tenets you hold in common with other philosophers, consequently I shall not dispute the existence of the gods; for that doctrine is agreeable to almost all men and to myself in

particular; but I shall oppose the reasons you give for it, which I think are very insufficient.

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that if any one thing seen should be false, none could be true; therefore he asserted all the senses to be infallible directors of truth. Nothing can be more rash than this; for by endeavouring to repel a light stroke he receives a heavy blow. In the subject of the nature of the gods he falls into the same errors. Whilst he would avoid the concretion of individual bodies[l], lest death and dissipation should be the consequence, he denies that the gods have body, but says they have something as if it was body; and they have no blood, but something as if it was blood. I wonder how one priest[m] can refrain from laughing when he sees another. It is yet a greater wonder that you can refrain from laughing amongst yourselves. It is no body, but as if it was body! I could understand this if it were applied to statues made of wax or clay; but in regard to the Deity I am not able to discover what is meant by as if it was body, or as if it was blood. Nor indeed are you, Velleius; though you will not confess it. Those precepts are delivered to you as dictates, which Epicurus carelessly blundered out; for he boasted, as we see in his writings, that he had no instructor; which I could easily believe without his public declaration of it,

[l] If any bodies are allowed to be compounded of individuals, it must likewise be allowed that the same individuals which concrete or assemble to form one body, as that of a man, are liable to be reduced to as many individuals again; for which reason Epicurus endeavoured to make the gods of other matter than the individuals which form mankind; and so advanced the absurd idle doctrine of, no body, but as if it was body; no blood, but as if it was blood.

[m] This was a saying of Cato the censor, as appears from Cicero's second book of Divination. Aruspex was an inspector into the sacrifices of the altar. I chose to translate it in one word; and when we consider the fopperies and impostures of Romish priests this translation may very well be indulged.

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[f] Cicero, as Erasmus has observed, took this comparison from Plato, ὥσπερ οἱ τραγωδοποιοί, etc.

arise, which, in your opinions, could not possibly be made without the help of bellows and anvils. Thus you have imposed on us an eternal master, whom we must dread day and night. For who can be free from fear of a Deity, who foresees, regards, and animadverts on everything, one who thinks all things his own, a curious, ever-busy God?

Hence first arose your εἱμαρμένη, as you call it, your fatal necessity; so that, whatever happens, you affirm that it flows from an eternal chain and continuance of causes. Of what value is this philosophy, which, like old women and illiterate men, atrributes everything to fate?

Then follows your μαντικὴ, in Latin called *divinatio*, divination; which, if we would listen to you, would plunge us into such superstition, that we should fall down and worship your inspectors into sacrifices, your augurs, your soothsayers, your prophets, and your fortunetellers.

Epicurus having freed us from these terrors and restored us to liberty, we have no dread of those beings, whom we have reason to think entirely free from all trouble themselves, and who do not impose any on others. We pay our adoration, indeed, with piety and reverence to that essence which is above all in excellence and perfection. But I fear my zeal for this doctrine has made me too prolix. However, I could not easily leave so eminent and important a subject unfinished, though I must confess I should rather endeavour to hear than speak so long.

Cotta, with his usual courtesy, then began. Velleius, says he, was it not for what you have advanced, I should have remained silent; for I have often

excel in beauty that bull[q] which carried Europa. For the question here is not concerning our genius and elocution, but our species and figure. If we could make and assume to ourselves any form, would you be unwilling to resemble the sea-triton, as he is painted supported swimming on sea-monsters, whose bodies are partly human? Here I touch on a difficult point; for so great is the force of nature, that there is no man who would not choose to be like a man; nor indeed no ant that would not be like an ant. But like what man? For how few can pretend to beauty! When I was at Athens, the whole flock of youths afforded scarcely one. You laugh I see; but what I tell you is the truth. Nay; to us who, after the examples of ancient philosophers, delight in boys, defects are often pleasing. Alcæus[r] was charmed with a wart on a boy's knuckle; but a wart is a blemish on the body; yet it seemed a beauty to him. Q. Catullus, my friend and colleague's father, was enamoured with your freedman Roscius[s]; on whom he wrote these verses:

[q] Cotta here very artfully alludes to the story of Jupiter and Europa, intimating that if a bull was not a beautiful creature, Jupiter would not have chosen that shape to have tempted Europa in.

[r] Alcæus the Lesbian poet, from whom the Alcaic verses were so called.

[s] This must be Roscius the famous actor, for he was Velleius's freedman. We see here that an action looked upon in one age or country with the greatest abhorrence, is talked familiarly of, and without reserve, in another, and by men of the first rank both in quality and genius. Socrates, in Xenophon's Banquet, is represented speaking of the love for boys, with as little reserve. However, custom can never make that right, which is by nature wrong; nor that wrong, which is right in the nature of things. There is a moral and natural turpitude in the action, by putting a part of the body to a use for which it was never designed. Wollaston, in his Religion of Nature delineated, has laudably endeavoured to show that virtue consists in using everything as it ought to be used.

If you should ask me what God is, or what his essence, I should follow the example of Simonides, who, when Hiero the tyrant proposed the same question to him, desired a day to consider of it. When he required his answer the next day, Simonides begged two days more, and often desiring double the number, instead of giving his answer, Hiero, with surprise, asked him his meaning in doing so: "Because," says he, "the longer I meditate on it the more obscure it appears to me." Simonides, who was not only a delightful poet, but reputed a wise and learned man in other branches of knowledge, had, I suppose, so many acute and refined arguments occur to him, that he was doubtful which was the truest, and therefore despaired of discovering any truth. But does your Epicurus (for I had rather contend with him than with you) say anything that is worthy the name of philosophy, or even of common sense? In the question concerning the nature of the gods, his first inquiry is whether there are gods or not. It would be dangerous, I believe, to be on the negative part in a public auditory; but it is very safe in a discourse of this kind, and in this company. I, who am a priest, and who think that religions and ceremonies ought sacredly to be maintained, would have the existence of the gods, which is the principal point in debate, not only fixed in opinion, but proved to a demonstration; for many notions flow into and disturb the mind, which sometimes seem to convince us that there are none. But see how candidly I will behave to you, as I will not touch upon those tenets you hold in common with other philosophers, consequently I shall not dispute the existence of the gods; for that doctrine is agreeable to almost all men and to myself in

particular; but I shall oppose the reasons you give for it, which I think are very insufficient.

You said that the general assent of men, of all nations, and all degrees, is an argument strong enough to induce us to acknowledge the being of the gods. This is not only a weak but a false argument; for first, how do you know the opinions of all nations? I really believe there are many people so savage that they have no thought of a deity. What think you of Diagoras, who was called the atheist, and of Theodorus? Did not they plainly deny the very essence of a deity? Protagoras of Abdera, whom you just now mentioned, the greatest sophist[g] of his age, was banished by order of the Athenians from their city and territories, and his books were publicly burnt, because these words were in the beginning of his treatise, "concerning the gods, I am unable to arrive at any knowledge whether there are, or are not, any." This, I imagine, restrained many from professing their disbelief of a deity; since the doubt of it only could not escape punishment. What shall we say of the sacrilegious, the impious, and the perjured? If Tubulus, Lucius, Lupus, or Carbo the son of Neptune[h], as Lucilius says, had

[g] Cicero, in his Academical Questions, calls him a sophist who professes philosophy through ostentation or interest.

[h] Tubulus, Lucius, Lupus, and Carbo, must be taken for execrable wretches, who rendered themselves notorious by their infamous actions; and either of them has as much a title to be called the son of Neptune as any other, for that is only an appellation given to such men as were remarkably terrible, and prone to injustice, rapine, and other acts of ferocity; the reason of their being called sons of Neptune is, because of their analogy to the raging of the sea, to which the savage dispositions of such men are compared. Busiris, Amycus, and Antæus, are called sons of Neptune; and Plautus, in his *Miles Gloriosus*, very humorously makes Pyrgopolynices

believed there are gods, would either of them have carried his perjuries and impieties to such excess? Your reasoning therefore to confirm your assertion is not so conclusive as you think it is. But, as this is the manner in which other philosophers have argued on the same subject, I will take no farther notice of it at present; I rather choose to proceed to what is properly your own. I allow that that there are gods. Instruct me then concerning their origin; inform me where they are, what sort of body, what mind they have, and what their course of life; for these I am desirous of knowing.

You attribute the most absolute power and efficacy to atoms. Out of them you pretend everything is made. But there are no atoms; for there is nothing without body; every place is occupied by body; therefore there can be no vacuum, no individual.

I advance these principles of the naturalists, without knowing whether they are true or false; yet they are more like truth than those absurdities you imbibed from Democritus, or before him from Leucippus, that there are certain light corpuscles, some smooth, some rough, some round, some square, some crooked, and bent as bows; which, by a fortuitous concourse, made

boast of his success over a grandson of Neptune. In this fragment of the comic poet Lucilius,

——— Tubulus, *si* Lucius, *umquam*,
Si Lupus, *aut* Carbo, *aut* Neptuni *filius*,———

Neptuni filius is tautologous, as the passage stands, if it be applicable to any one execrable wretch as well as another. Jos. Scaliger was for rejecting the word *aut* before *Neptuni*, and so *Carbo* would be *Neptuni filius*; and in that sense I have translated it, in which there is a climax that is elegant.

heaven and earth, without the influence of any natural power.

This opinion, C. Velleius, you have brought down to these our times; and you would sooner be deprived of the greatest advantages of life, than of that authority; for before you knew those tenets, you thought you ought to profess yourself an Epicurean; so that it was necessary you should either embrace these absurdities, or lose the philosophical character you had taken upon you; and what could bribe you to renounce the Epicurean opinion? Nothing, you say, can prevail on you to forsake the truth, and the sure means of a happy life. Is that therefore the truth? for I shall not contest your happy life; which you think the Deity himself does not enjoy, unless he languishes in idleness. But where is truth? Is it in your innumerable worlds; some of which are rising, some falling, in every point of time? Or is it in your individual corpuscles, which form such excellent works without the direction of any natural power or reason? But I forget my promise, and exceed the bounds I first proposed. Granting then everything to be made of atoms, what advantage is that to your argument? For we are searching after the nature of the gods; and allowing them to be made of atoms, they cannot be eternal; because whatever is made of atoms must have had a beginning; if so, there were no gods till such beginning; and if the gods had a beginning they must necessarily have an end; as you before contended against Plato's world. Where then is your beatitude and immortality, those attributes of the deity which by endeavouring to prove you are reduced to the greatest perplexities? For you said that God had

no body, but something as if it was body; and no blood, but something as if it was blood. It is a frequent practice among you, when you assert anything that has no resemblance to truth, and would avoid reprehension, to advance some farther improbability. How much more ingenuous would it be to acknowledge a doubt than to persist in so shameless an opposition? Like Epicurus, who, when he found that if his atoms were allowed to descend by their own weight, our actions could not be in our own power, because their motions would be certain and necessary, invented an expedient which escaped Democritus to avoid necessity. He says, that when the atoms descend by their own weight and gravity they move a little obliquely. There is something more scandalous in this than in acknowledging an inability to defend a proposition. His practice is the same against the logicians, who say that in all propositions in which yes or no is required, one of them must be true; he was afraid that if this was granted, then in a proposition, that Epicurus will be alive or dead to-morrow, either one or the other must necessarily be; therefore he absolutely denied the necessity of yes or no. Can anything show stupidity in a greater degree?

Zeno[i], being pressed by Arcesilas[k], who pronounced all things to be false which are perceived by the senses, said some were false but not all. Epicurus was afraid

[i] Zeno here mentioned is not the same that Cotta spoke of before. This was the founder of the Stoics. The other was an Epicurean philosopher whom he had heard at Athens.

[k] Diogenes Laertius calls Arcesilas author of the *middle* Academy. He went farther than most of the Academics in degrading the senses, by asserting all to be false that is seen by them.

that if any one thing seen should be false, none could be true; therefore he asserted all the senses to be infallible directors of truth. Nothing can be more rash than this; for by endeavouring to repel a light stroke he receives a heavy blow. In the subject of the nature of the gods he falls into the same errors. Whilst he would avoid the concretion of individual bodies[l], lest death and dissipation should be the consequence, he denies that the gods have body, but says they have something as if it was body; and they have no blood, but something as if it was blood. I wonder how one priest[m] can refrain from laughing when he sees another. It is yet a greater wonder that you can refrain from laughing amongst yourselves. It is no body, but as if it was body! I could understand this if it were applied to statues made of wax or clay; but in regard to the Deity I am not able to discover what is meant by as if it was body, or as if it was blood. Nor indeed are you, Velleius; though you will not confess it. Those precepts are delivered to you as dictates, which Epicurus carelessly blundered out; for he boasted, as we see in his writings, that he had no instructor; which I could easily believe without his public declaration of it,

[l] If any bodies are allowed to be compounded of individuals, it must likewise be allowed that the same individuals which concrete or assemble to form one body, as that of a man, are liable to be reduced to as many individuals again; for which reason Epicurus endeavoured to make the gods of other matter than the individuals which form mankind; and so advanced the absurd idle doctrine of, no body, but as if it was body; no blood, but as if it was blood.

[m] This was a saying of Cato the censor, as appears from Cicero's second book of Divination. Aruspex was an inspector into the sacrifices of the altar. I chose to translate it in one word; and when we consider the fopperies and impostures of Romish priests this translation may very well be indulged.

for the same reason that I could believe the master of a very bad edifice boasting that he had no architect but himself; for there is nothing of the Academy, nothing of the Lycæum[n], in his discipline; nothing but puerilities. He might hear Xenocrates[o]. Immortal gods, what teacher was he! Yet there are those who believe he heard him; but he says otherwise; and I shall give more credit to his word than to another's. He confesses that he heard a certain disciple of Plato, one Pamphilus, at Samos; for he lived there when he was young, with his father and his brothers. His father Neocles was a farmer in those parts; but the farm, I think, not being sufficient to maintain him, he turned schoolmaster; yet Epicurus treats this Platonic with wonderful contempt; so fearful was he that it should be thought he had ever been instructed. But it is well known he had been a hearer of Nausiphanes the democritic; and, since he could not deny it, he loaded him with contumelies in abundance. If he did not hear the democritical principles, what did he ever hear? What is there in Epicurus's physics that is not taken from Democritus? For, though he altered some things, as what I mentioned before of the oblique motion of the atoms, yet most of his doctrines are the same; his atoms; his vacuum; his images; infinity of space; innumerable worlds, their rise and decay; and almost every part of natural learning that he treats of. Now do you understand what is meant by as if it was body, and as if it was blood? For I not only acknow-

[n] The Lycæum was a school near Athens, in which Aristotle taught, as Plato did in the Academy.

[o] Xenocrates was so remarkably dull that his name became a proverb.

ledge that you are a better judge of it than I am, but I can bear it without envy. If any sentiments, indeed, are communicated without obscurity, what is there that Velleius can understand, and Cotta not? I know what body is, and what blood is; but I cannot possibly find out the meaning of as if it was body, and as if it was blood. Do not you conceal your principles from me, as Pythagoras did his from those who were not his disciples; neither be deliberately obscure like Heraclitus. But the truth is (which I may say among us) you do not understand them yourself.

This, I perceive, is what you contend for, that the gods have a certain figure that has nothing concrete, nothing solid, nothing of express substance, nothing prominent in it; but that it is pure, smooth, and transparent. Let us suppose it the same with the Venus[p] of Coos; which is not a body, but the representation of a body; nor is the red, which is drawn there and mixed with the white, real blood, but a certain resemblance of blood; so in Epicurus's deity there is no real substance, but the resemblance of substance. Let me take for granted what is not to be understood; then tell me what are the lineaments and figures of these penciled deities. Here you have plenty of arguments, by which you would show the gods to be in human form. The first is, that our minds are so anticipated and prepossessed, that whenever we think of a deity the human shape occurs to us. The next is, that as the divine nature excels all things, so it ought to be of the most beautiful form, and there is no form more

[p] The Coan Venus was the work of Apelles, highly applauded by the ancients.

beautiful than the human; and the third is, that reason cannot reside in any other shape. First, let us consider each argument separately. You seem to me to assume a principle, despotically I may say, that has no manner of probability in it. Who was ever so blind, in contemplating these subjects, as not to see that the gods were represented in human form, either by the particular advice of wise men, who thought by those means the more easily to turn the minds of the ignorant from a depravity of manners to the worship of the gods; or through superstition, which was the cause of their believing that when they paid adoration to these images they approached the gods themselves. These conceits were not a little improved by the poets, painters, and artificers. For it would not have been very easy to represent the gods debating and executing any work in another form; and perhaps this opinion arose from the idea which mankind have of their own beauty. But do not you, who are so great an adept in physics, see what a soothing flatterer, what a sort of bawd, nature is to herself? Do you think there is any creature on land or in the sea, that is not highly delighted with its own form? If it was not so, why would not a bull leap a mare, or a horse a cow? Do you believe an eagle, a lion, or a dolphin, prefer any shape to their own? If nature therefore hath instructed us in the same manner, that nothing is more beautiful than man, what wonder is it that we, for that reason, should imagine the gods are of the human form? Do you suppose, if beasts were endowed with reason, that every one would not give this prize of beauty to his own species? Yet, by Hercules, (I speak as I think) though I am fond enough of myself, I dare not say I

excel in beauty that bull[q] which carried Europa. For the question here is not concerning our genius and elocution, but our species and figure. If we could make and assume to ourselves any form, would you be unwilling to resemble the sea-triton, as he is painted supported swimming on sea-monsters, whose bodies are partly human? Here I touch on a difficult point; for so great is the force of nature, that there is no man who would not choose to be like a man; nor indeed no ant that would not be like an ant. But like what man? For how few can pretend to beauty! When I was at Athens, the whole flock of youths afforded scarcely one. You laugh I see; but what I tell you is the truth. Nay; to us who, after the examples of ancient philosophers, delight in boys, defects are often pleasing. Alcæus[r] was charmed with a wart on a boy's knuckle; but a wart is a blemish on the body; yet it seemed a beauty to him. Q. Catullus, my friend and colleague's father, was enamoured with your freedman Roscius[s]; on whom he wrote these verses:

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As once I stood to hail the rising day,
Roscius, appearing on the left, I spied.
Forgive me, gods, if I presume to say
The mortal's beauty with th' immortal vied.

Roscius more beautiful than a god! yet he was then, as he now is, squint-eyed. But what signifies that, if his defects were beauties to Catullus?

I return to the gods. Can we suppose any of them to be pink-eyed or to squint? Have they any warts? Are any of them hook-nosed, flap-eared, beetle-browed, or jolt-headed, as some of us are? Or are they free from imperfections? Let us grant you that. Are they all alike in the face? For if they are many, one must necessarily be more beautiful than another; and some deity would not be the most beautiful. Or if their faces are all alike, there would be an Academy[t] in heaven; for if one god does not differ from another there is no possibility of knowing or distinguishing them. What if your assertion, Velleius, prove absolutely false, that no form occurs to us, in our contemplations on the Deity, but the human? Will you, notwithstanding that, persist in the defence of such an absurdity? Supposing that form occurs to us, as you say it does, and we know Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Neptune, Vulcan, Apollo, and the other deities, by the countenances which painters and statuaries have given them; and not only by their countenances, but by their decorations, their age, and attire; yet the

[t] Cotta says, if every god was alike, there should be an Academy in heaven; by which he means that one god could not be distinguished from another; that is, there would be the same uncertainty in heaven as is among the Academics. This is the true meaning, as appears from what Cotta says directly after.

Egyptians, the Syrians, and almost all barbarous nations[u], are without such distinctions. You may see a greater regard paid by them to certain beasts than by us to the most sacred temples and images of the gods; for many shrines are rifled, and images of the deities are carried from their most sacred places by us; but we never heard that an Egyptian offered any violence to a crocodile, an ibis[x], or a cat. What do you think then? Do not the Egyptians esteem their sacred bull[y], their apis, as a deity? Yes, by Hercules, as certainly as you do our protectress Juno, whom you never behold, even in your dreams, without a goatskin, a spear, a shield, and broad sandals. But the Grecian Juno of Argos and the Roman Juno are not represented in this manner; so that the Grecians, the Lanuvinians[z], and we, ascribe different forms to Juno; and our Capitoline Jupiter is not the same with the Jupiter Ammon of the Africans. / Therefore ought not a naturalist, that is, an inquirer into the secrets of nature, to be ashamed of seeking a testimony of truth from minds prepossessed by custom. According to the rule you have laid down, it may be said that Jupiter is always bearded, Apollo always beardless; that Minerva has gray, and Neptune azure eyes; and indeed we must then honour that Vulcan at Athens, made by Alcamenes, whose lameness through his thin robes appears to be

[u] Tully means those nations which were neither Greek nor Roman.

[x] The ibis is a tall bird with a long bill, and is said to destroy serpents; which may be one reason why the Egyptians paid that reverence to it.

[y] It was not every bull that would make a god; the bull which they called apis was distinguished by several marks in the body; and without those marks no bull was deified.

[z] Lanuvinum was a part of Italy; the inhabitants of which, as appears from this passage, had a different Juno from the Romans.

no deformity. Shall we therefore receive a lame deity, because we have such an account of him? Consider, likewise, that the gods go by what names we give them. Now they have as many names as men have languages: for Vulcan is not called Vulcan in Italy, Africa, or Spain; as you are called Velleius in all countries. Besides, the gods are innumerable, though the list of their names is of no great length even in the records of our priests. Have they no names? You must necessarily confess indeed they have none; for what occasion is there for different names, if their persons are alike? How much more laudable would it be, Velleius, to acknowledge that you do not know what you do not know, than to follow that blunderer, whom you must surely despise? Do you think the Deity is like either me or you? Really you do not think he is like either of us. What is to be done then? Shall I call the sun, the moon, or the sky, a deity? If so, they are consequently happy. But what pleasures can they enjoy? And they are wise too. But how can wisdom reside in such shapes? These are your own principles. Therefore if they are not of human form, as I have advanced, and you cannot persuade yourself that they are of any other, why are you cautious of denying absolutely the being of any gods? You dare not deny it; which is very prudent in you, though here you are not afraid of the people, but of the gods themselves. I have known Epicureans, who reverence[a] even the least images of the gods, though I perceive it to be the opinion of some, that Epicurus,

[a] *Sigilla numerantes* is the common reading: but P. Manucius proposes *venerantes*, which I choose as the better of the two; and in which sense I have translated it.

through fear of offending against the Athenian laws, has allowed a Deity in words, and destroyed him in fact; so in those his select and short sentences, which are called by you κυρίαι δόξαι[b], this, I think, is the first; "That being, which is happy and immortal, is not burthened with any labour, nor imposes any on another." In his delivery of this sentence some think he avoided speaking clearly on purpose, though it was manifestly without design. But they judge ill of a man who had not the least art. It is doubtful whether he means that there is any being happy and immortal; or that if there is a being happy, he must likewise be immortal. They do not consider that he speaks here indeed ambiguously; but in many other places both he and Metrodorus explain themselves as clearly as you have done. He believed there are gods; and he was most exceedingly afraid of what he declared ought to be no objects of fear, death and the gods; with the apprehensions of which the common rank of people are very little affected; but he says the minds of all mortals are terrified by them. Many thousands commit robberies in the face of death; others rifle all the temples they can; those, I warrant you, are mightily intimidated by the thoughts of death, and these by the fear of the gods!

But since you dare not, for I am now addressing my discourse to Epicurus himself, absolutely deny the existence of the gods, what hinders you from ascribing a divine nature to the sun, the world, or some eternal mind? I never, says he, saw wisdom and a rational soul in any but a human form. What! did you never observe something like them in the sun, the moon, or

[b] Fundamental doctrines.

the five moving planets? The sun, terminating his course in two extreme parts of one circle[c], finishes his annual revolutions. The moon, receiving her light from the sun, completes the same[d] course in the space of a month. The five planets in the same circle, some nearer[e], others more remote from the earth, begin the same courses together, and finish them in different spaces of time. Did you never observe anything of this kind, Epicurus? So that according to you there can be neither sun, moon, nor stars, because nothing can exist but what we have touched or seen[f]. What! have you seen the Deity himself? Why else do you believe there is any? If this doctrine prevails, we must reject all that history relates, or reason discovers; and the people who inhabit inland countries, must not believe there is such a thing as the sea. This is so narrow a way of thinking, that if you had been born in the isle of Seriphus, and had never been from it, where you frequently see little hares and foxes, you would not therefore believe that there are such beasts as lions and panthers; and if any one should describe an elephant to you, you would think he designed to ridicule you.

[c] That is, the zodiac.

[d] The moon, as well as the sun, is indeed in the zodiac, but she does not measure the same course in a month. She moves in another line of the zodiac, nearer the earth.

[e] They distinguished the sun and moon, though esteemed moving planets, from the other five, because of their great light and influence. By the same circle Cicero means the zodiac. Of the sun, moon, and five other planets, Saturn is the farthest distant from the earth, the moon the nearest.

[f] According to the doctrines of Epicurus, none of these bodies themselves are clearly seen, but *simulacra ex corporibus effluentia*: see p. 20, and the note in the same page.

You indeed, Velleius, have concluded your argument not after the manner of your own sect, but of the logicians, to which your people are utter strangers. You have taken it for granted that the gods are happy. I allow it. You say that without virtue no one can be happy. I willingly concur with you in that. You likewise say, that virtue cannot reside where reason is not. That I must necessarily allow. Then you add that reason cannot exist but in a human form. Who do you think will admit that? If it were true, what occasion was there to come so gradually to it? And to what purpose? It is a presumption of your own. I perceive your gradations from happiness to virtue, and from virtue to reason; but how do you come from reason to human form? There indeed you do not descend by degrees, but precipitately. Nor can I conceive why Epicurus should rather say the gods are like men, than that men are like the gods. You ask what is the difference; for, say you, if this is like that, that is like this. I grant it; but this I assert, that the gods could not take their form from men; for the gods always existed, and never had a beginning, if they are to exist eternally; but men had a beginning; therefore that form, of which the immortal gods are, must have had existence before mankind; consequently the gods should not be said to be of human form, but our form should be called divine. However, let this be as you will.

I now inquire after your mighty chance; for you deny a divine intelligence to have had any share in the formation of things. But what is that mighty chance? Whence proceeded that happy concourse of atoms,

arise, which, in your opinions, could not possibly be made without the help of bellows and anvils. Thus you have imposed on us an eternal master, whom we must dread day and night. For who can be free from fear of a Deity, who foresees, regards, and animadverts on everything, one who thinks all things his own, a curious, ever-busy God?

Hence first arose your εἱμαρμένη, as you call it, your fatal necessity; so that, whatever happens, you affirm that it flows from an eternal chain and continuance of causes. Of what value is this philosophy, which, like old women and illiterate men, atrributes everything to fate?

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Epicurus having freed us from these terrors and restored us to liberty, we have no dread of those beings, whom we have reason to think entirely free from all trouble themselves, and who do not impose any on others. We pay our adoration, indeed, with piety and reverence to that essence which is above all in excellence and perfection. But I fear my zeal for this doctrine has made me too prolix. However, I could not easily leave so eminent and important a subject unfinished, though I must confess I should rather endeavour to hear than speak so long.

Cotta, with his usual courtesy, then began. Velleius, says he, was it not for what you have advanced, I should have remained silent; for I have often

you place them in the deity on account of the beauty of human form[g].

Depending on these dreams, not only Epicurus, Metrodorus, and Hermachus, declaimed against Pythagoras, Plato, and Empedocles, but that little harlot Leontium presumed to write against Theophrastus: indeed she had a neat Attic style; and notwithstanding the garden of Epicurus[h] abounded with these liberties, you are always complaining against them. Zeno wrangled[i]. Albutius is not worth mentioning. Nothing could be more elegant or humane than Phædrus, yet a smart expression would disgust the old man. Epicurus treated Aristotle with great contumely. He foully slandered Phædo, the disciple of Socrates. He pelted Timocrates[k], the brother of his companion Metrodorus, with whole volumes, because he dissented from him in some point of philosophy. He was ungrateful even to Democritus, after whom he copied; and his master Nausiphanes, from whom he learned nothing[l], had no better treatment from him. Zeno gave abusive language not only to those who were then living, as Apollodorus, Syllus, and the rest; but

[g] These are strong arguments against the absurd doctrine of the deity being in human form; which the Muggletonians, and some other ignorant Christians before them, have asserted on the authority of Moses, whom they misunderstood when he says "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Genesis, ch. i. ver. 27.

[h] Epicurus taught his disciples in a garden.

[i] Zeno the Epicurean, who has been mentioned before.

[k] Timocrates, according to Diogenes Laertius, was even with him in his abuses.

[l] That is, from whom he pretended to have learned nothing, as has been observed before in this book. Epicurus was ambitious of the title of *αὐτοδιδακτος*, that is, *self-taught*; one who never received instruction from another.

If you should ask me what God is, or what his essence, I should follow the example of Simonides, who, when Hiero the tyrant proposed the same question to him, desired a day to consider of it. When he required his answer the next day, Simonides begged two days more, and often desiring double the number, instead of giving his answer, Hiero, with surprise, asked him his meaning in doing so: "Because," says he, "the longer I meditate on it the more obscure it appears to me." Simonides, who was not only a delightful poet, but reputed a wise and learned man in other branches of knowledge, had, I suppose, so many acute and refined arguments occur to him, that he was doubtful which was the truest, and therefore despaired of discovering any truth. But does your Epicurus (for I had rather contend with him than with you) say anything that is worthy the name of philosophy, or even of common sense? In the question concerning the nature of the gods, his first inquiry is whether there are gods or not. It would be dangerous, I believe, to be on the negative part in a public auditory; but it is very safe in a discourse of this kind, and in this company. I, who am a priest, and who think that religions and ceremonies ought sacredly to be maintained, would have the existence of the gods, which is the principal point in debate, not only fixed in opinion, but proved to a demonstration; for many notions flow into and disturb the mind, which sometimes seem to convince us that there are none. But see how candidly I will behave to you, as I will not touch upon those tenets you hold in common with other philosophers, consequently I shall not dispute the existence of the gods; for that doctrine is agreeable to almost all men and to myself in

particular; but I shall oppose the reasons you give for it, which I think are very insufficient.

You said that the general assent of men, of all nations, and all degrees, is an argument strong enough to induce us to acknowledge the being of the gods. This is not only a weak but a false argument; for first, how do you know the opinions of all nations? I really believe there are many people so savage that they have no thought of a deity. What think you of Diagoras, who was called the atheist, and of Theodorus? Did not they plainly deny the very essence of a deity? Protagoras of Abdera, whom you just now mentioned, the greatest sophist[g] of his age, was banished by order of the Athenians from their city and territories, and his books were publicly burnt, because these words were in the beginning of his treatise, "concerning the gods, I am unable to arrive at any knowledge whether there are, or are not, any." This, I imagine, restrained many from professing their disbelief of a deity; since the doubt of it only could not escape punishment. What shall we say of the sacrilegious, the impious, and the perjured? If Tubulus, Lucius, Lupus, or Carbo the son of Neptune[h], as Lucilius says, had

[g] Cicero, in his Academical Questions, calls him a sophist who professes philosophy through ostentation or interest.

[h] Tubulus, Lucius, Lupus, and Carbo, must be taken for execrable wretches, who rendered themselves notorious by their infamous actions; and either of them has as much a title to be called the son of Neptune as any other, for that is only an appellation given to such men as were remarkably terrible, and prone to injustice, rapine, and other acts of ferocity; the reason of their being called sons of Neptune is, because of their analogy to the raging of the sea, to which the savage dispositions of such men are compared. Busiris, Amycus, and Antæus, are called sons of Neptune; and Plautus, in his *Miles Gloriosus*, very humorously makes Pyrgopolynices

than an elephant; yet where can you find any of a larger size? I am speaking here of beasts. But among men, do we not see a disparity of manners in persons very much alike, and a similitude of manners in persons unlike? If this sort of argument were once to prevail, Velleius, observe what it would lead to. You have laid it down as certain, that reason cannot possibly reside in any form but the human. Another may affirm, that it can exist in none but a terrestrial being; in none but a being that is born, that grows up, and receives instruction; and that consists of a soul and an infirm and perishable body; in short, in none but a mortal man. But if you decline those opinions, why should a single form disturb you? You perceive that man is possessed of reason and understanding, with all the infirmities I have mentioned interwoven with his being; abstracted from which, you nevertheless know God, you say, if the lineaments do but remain. This is not talking considerately, but at a venture; for surely you did not think what an encumbrance anything superfluous or unuseful is, not only in a man, but a tree. How troublesome it is to have a finger too much! And why so? Because neither use nor ornament requires more than five: but your deity has not only a finger more than he wants, but a head, a neck, shoulders, sides, a paunch, back, hams, hands, feet, thighs, and legs. Are these parts necessary to immortality? Are they conducive to the existence of the deity? Is the face itself of use? Rather the brain, the heart, the lights, and the liver; for these are the seats of life. The features of the face contribute nothing to the preservation of it.

You censured those, who, beholding those excellent

and stupendous works, the world and its respective parts, the heaven, the earth, the seas, and the splendour with which they are adorned; who, contemplating the sun, moon, and stars; and who, observing the maturity and changes of the seasons and vicissitudes of times, inferred from thence that there must be some excellent and eminent essence, that made, moves, directs, and governs them. Suppose they should mistake in their conjecture, yet I see what they aim at. But what is that great and noble work, which appears to you to be the effect of a divine mind, and from whence you conclude that there are gods? I have, say you, a certain information of a deity imprinted in my mind. Of a bearded Jupiter, I suppose, and a helmeted Minerva. But do you imagine them to be such? How much better are the notions of the ignorant vulgar, who not only believe the deities have members like ours, but that they make use of them; and therefore they assign them a bow and arrows, a spear, a shield, a trident, and lightning: and though they do not behold the actions of the gods, they cannot entertain a thought of a deity doing nothing. The Egyptians (so much ridiculed) held no beast to be sacred but those from which they received some advantage. The ibis, a very large bird, with strong legs, and a horny long beak, destroys a great number of serpents. These birds keep Egypt from pestilential diseases, by killing and devouring the flying serpents, brought from the deserts of Libya by the south-west wind[P], which prevents the mischief that

[P] The wind mentioned by Cicero is *ventus Africus*, which is south-west from Egypt. Ammianus Marcellinus gives a lively description of these birds engaging in battle with these serpents in the air, their killing and devouring them.

may attend their biting while alive, or any infection when dead. I could speak of the advantage of the ichneumon[q], the crocodile, and the cat[r], but I am unwilling to be tedious; yet I will conclude with observing, that the barbarians paid divine honours to beasts, because of the benefits they received from them; whereas your gods not only confer no benefit, but are idle and do nothing. They have nothing to do, your teacher says. Epicurus truly, like indolent boys, thinks nothing preferable to idleness; yet those very boys, when they have a holiday, entertain themselves in some sportive exercise. But we are to suppose the deity in such an inactive state, that if he should move, we may justly fear he would be no longer happy. This doctrine divests the gods of motion and operation; besides, it encourages men to be lazy, as they are by this taught to believe, that the least labour is incompatible even with divine felicity.

But let it be as you would have it, that the deity is in the form and image of a man. Where is his residence? what is his course of life? and what is it that constitutes his happiness? For it seems necessary that he who would be happy should use and enjoy what

[q] The ichneumon is a rat, which the Egyptians revered because it destroyed the crocodile's eggs. But here seems to be a contradiction in the reasons usually assigned for their regard both to the ichneumon and the crocodile. The crocodile is said to have been worshipped, because it intimidated the Arabian and other African robbers, when they attempted to pass the Nile into Egypt. Why therefore should the ichneumon be revered for destroying the crocodile's eggs? I can think of no reason but this: because, by destroying the eggs, the crocodiles might be prevented increasing so much as to be dangerous to the Egyptians, and yet enough of them left to terrify the robbers.

[r] An Egyptian cat was thought to be an antidote against the sting of an asp.

belongs to him. With regard to place, even inanimates have their proper stations assigned; the earth the lowest, water is higher than the earth, the air is above the water, and fire has the highest situation. Some creatures inhabit the earth, some the water, and some, of an amphibious nature, live in both. There are some also, which are thought to be born in fire, and which often appear fluttering in burning furnaces. In the first place, therefore, I shall ask, where is the habitation of your deity? and next, what motive is it that stirs him from his place, supposing he ever moves? Lastly, since it is proper to animated beings to have an inclination to something that is agreeable to their several natures, what is it that the deity affects, and to what purpose does he exert the motion of his mind[s] and reason? In short, how is he happy, how eternal? Whichever of these points you touch upon, I am afraid you will come lamely off. There is no end of reasoning on a false foundation; for you asserted[t] likewise that the form of the deity is perceptible by the mind, but not by sense; that it is neither solid nor invariable in number; that it is to be discerned by similitude and transition[u], and that a constant supply of images is

[s] Reason is a motion of the mind; but the first motions of the mind are not always reasonable; the use of reason therefore is, to check the first motions when leading to evil, and to indulge them when leading to good.

[t] Bishop Stillingfleet, in his Origines Sacræ, says almost the same; but I dare say, if we exclude the senses in the search after the deity, we shall be but blanks in nature. There is no knowledge but what comes through those channels; and though God is not the immediate object of sense, the senses must guide us to what knowledge we are capable of attaining concerning him.

[u] A transition of images, our author means, which succeed one to another, from a constant supply of atoms, according to the doctrine of Epicurus. This part of the Epicurean system is finely answered by Cotta, in what directly follows.

perpetually flowing from innumerable atoms, on which our minds being intent, we from thence conclude that essence to be happy and everlasting.

What, in the name of those deities concerning whom we are now disputing, is the meaning of this? For, if they exist only in thought, and have no solidity nor substance, what difference can there be between thinking of a hippocentaur, and thinking of a deity? Other philosophers call every such effigiation of the mind, vain motion; but you term it the approach and entrance of images into the mind. Thus when I imagine that I behold T. Gracchus haranguing the people in the capitol, and collecting their suffrages[x] concerning M. Octavius, I then call that a vain motion of the mind; but you affirm, that the images of Gracchus and Octavius are present, which, coming from the capitol, are conveyed to my mind. The case is the same, you say, in regard to the deity, with the frequent representation of which the mind is so affected, that from thence may be inferred the gods[y] are happy and

[x] The original is, *de M. Octavio deferentem sitellam;* some, says Lambinus, read *cistellam.* The suffrages were first cast into a box, and then inspected; this expression, therefore, *deferentem sitellam,* or *cistellam,* means no more than collecting the suffrages. The history to which this alludes is preserved by Plutarch and Appian.

[y] By the word *deus,* as often used by our author, we are to understand all the gods in that theology then treated of, and not a single personal deity; so in this passage, *hoc idem fieri (dicis* understood) *in deo, cujus crebra facie pellantur animi; ex quo esse beati, atque æterni, intelligantur;* the literal translation of which is, "the case is the same (*you say* understood) as to the deity, with the frequent representation of which our minds are so struck, or affected, that from thence may be inferred they are happy and eternal." Who are *they?* The relative is to *deus;* that is, the gods included *in deo,* in the divine Nature. This transition from the singular to the plural number, when speaking of the divine Nature, is frequent in the writings of Cicero, and likewise of Seneca. A little before, Cotta says to

eternal. Let it be granted that there are such images by which the mind is affected, yet it is only a certain form that occurs; and why must that form be pronounced happy, why eternal? What are those images you talk of, or whence do they proceed? This loose manner of arguing is taken from Democritus; but he is reprehended by many for it; nor can you derive any consequence from it; but the whole system is weak and imperfect; or what can be less within the bounds of probability than that the images of Homer, Archilochus, Romulus, Numa, Pythagoras, and Plato, should come into my mind; yet not in the form in which they existed? How therefore can they be those persons? And whose images are they? Aristotle tells us, that there never was such a person as Orpheus the poet[z]; and it is said, that the verse called Orphic verse was the invention of Cercops a Pythagorean; yet Orpheus, that is, the image of him, as you will have it, often runs in my head. What is the reason that I entertain one idea of the figure of the same person, and you another? Why do we image to ourselves such things as never had any existence, and which never can have,

Velleius, *dicebas speciem dei percipi cogitatione, non sensu, nec esse in ea ullam soliditatem, neque eandem ad numerum permanere.* You said that the form of the deity is perceptible by the mind, but not by sense; that it is neither solid nor invariable in number. By *neque eandem ad numerum permanere* we must understand that the deity, in which all the divine Nature is comprehended, is not confined to one identical person, but extended to many. I have been the larger on this passage, because I am inclined to think that this remark, on the manner in which the word *deus* is often used, may be of advantage to those who read the writings of our author.

[z] The best commentators on this passage agree, that Cicero does not mean that Aristotle affirmed there was no such person as Orpheus, but that there was no such poet, and that the verse called Orphic was said to be the invention of another. The passage of Aristotle to which Cicero here alludes, has, as Dr. Davis observes, long been lost.

as Scyllas[a] and Chimæras? Why do we frame ideas of men, countries, and cities, which we never saw? How do I form representations of them as I think fit? How do they come to me, even in my sleep, without being called or sought after?

The whole affair, Velleius, is ridiculous. You do not impose images on our eyes only, but on our minds; so great is your privilege of prating! But how rashly do you[b] say there is a transition of images frequently flowing, and therefore out of many one must be perceived! I should be ashamed of my ignorance, if you, who assert this, could conceive it yourselves; for how do you prove that these images are continued in uninterrupted motion[c]? Or, if uninterrupted, how eternal? There is a constant supply, you say, of innumerable atoms. But must they, for that reason, be all eternal? To elude this, you have recourse to equilibration (for so, with your leave, I will call your Ισονομια[d]), and say, that, as there is a sort of nature mortal, there is a sort immortal; by the same rule, as there are men mortal, there are men immortal; and as some arise from the earth, some must arise from the water also; and as there are causes which destroy, there must be causes which preserve. Be it as you say; but let those causes preserve which have existence themselves; I cannot conceive these your gods to have any.

[a] Virgil, in his third book of the Æneid, has described the rock Scylla as a monster; and Lucretius has described Chimæra, a mountain in Lycia, as another.

[b] That is, the Epicureans.

[c] These images are to be understood as in a constant uninterrupted motion, and never to rest; in which sense Lucretius delivers this doctrine of images after Epicurus:

Nec mora, nec requies, inter datur ulla fluendi.

[d] A just proportion between the different sorts of beings.

But how does all this face of things arise from individual corpuscles? Were there any such atoms (as there are not), they might perhaps impel one another, and be jumbled together in their motion; but they could never be able to form, figure, colour, or animate; so that you by no means demonstrate the immortality of your deity. Let us now inquire into his happiness. It is certain that without virtue there can be no happiness; but virtue consists in action; now, your deity does nothing, therefore he is void of virtue, consequently cannot be happy. What sort of life does he lead? He has a constant supply, you say, of good things unmixed with bad: what are those good things? Sensual pleasures, no doubt; for you know no delight of the mind, but what arises from the body, and returns to it. I do not suppose, Velleius, that you are like some of the Epicureans, who are ashamed of Epicurus's words*, in which he openly avows, that he has no idea of any good separate from wanton and obscene pleasures, which without a blush he names distinctly. What food, therefore, what drink, what variety of music or flowers, what kind of contact, what odours, will you offer to the gods, to fill them with pleasures? The poets, indeed, provide them banquets of nectar and ambrosia, and a Hebe or a Ganymede to serve up the cup. But what is it, Epicurus, that you do for them? for I do not see from whence your deity should have those things, nor how he could use them. Therefore the nature of man is better constituted for a happy life

* Some give *quos non pudeat earum* EPICURI *vocum*; but the best copies have not *non*; nor would it be consistent with Cotta to say *quos non pudeat*; for he throughout represents Velleius as a perfect Epicurean in every article.

than the nature of the gods, because men enjoy various kinds of pleasures; but those you look on as superficial, which delight the senses only by a titillation, as Epicurus calls it. What end is there of this trifling? Even Philo, who followed the Academy, could not bear to hear the soft and luscious delights of the Epicureans despised; for he perfectly remembered and repeated many sentences of Epicurus in the very words in which they were written. He likewise recited many, which were more gross, from Metrodorus, the sage colleague of Epicurus, who blamed his brother Timocrates, because he would not allow that a happy life consists in pampering the belly; nor has he done it once only, but often. You grant what I say, I perceive; for you know it to be true. I can produce the books if you should deny it; but I do not now undertake to oppose your reducing all things to pleasure: that is another question. What I am now showing is, that your gods are void of pleasure, and therefore, according to your own manner of reasoning, they are not happy. But they are free from pain. Is that sufficient for beings who are supposed to enjoy all good things, and the most supreme felicity? The deity, they say, is constantly meditating on his own happiness, having no other idea in his mind. Consider a little; reflect what a figure the deity would make, idly thinking of nothing through all eternity but "It is very well with me, and I am happy;" nor do I see why this happy deity should not fear being destroyed, since without any intermission he is drove and agitated by an everlasting incursion of atoms, and from whom images are constantly flowing. Your deity, therefore, is neither happy nor eternal. Epicurus, it seems, has written books con-

cerning sanctity and piety to the gods. But how does he speak on these subjects? You would say, that you heard Coruncanius or Scævola, the high priests, and not him, who tore up all religion by the roots, and who overthrew the temples and altars of the immortal gods, not with hands, like Xerxes[f], but with arguments; for, what reason is there that men should worship the gods, when the gods, as you say, not only do not regard men, but are entirely careless of everything, and absolutely do nothing? But they are, you say, of so glorious and excellent a nature, that a wise man is induced by their excellence to adore them. Can there be any glory in that nature which only contemplates its own happiness, and neither will do, nor does, nor ever did, anything? Besides, what piety is due to a being from whom you receive nothing? or how are you indebted to him who bestows no benefits? Piety, you say, is a justice towards the gods; but what right have they to it, when there is no communication between us? And sanctity is the knowledge of worshipping them; but I do not understand why they are to be worshipped, if we are neither to receive nor expect any good from them; and why should we worship them from an admiration only of that nature, in which we can behold nothing excellent?

You value yourselves upon being free from superstition, which is a consequence attending the disbelief of the divinity; for do you imagine Diagoras or Theodorus, who absolutely denied the being of the gods, could be superstitious? I do not suspect even Protagoras, who doubted whether there are gods or not.

[f] The destruction of the temples by Xerxes, when he invaded Greece, is related by Herodotus.

The opinions of these philosophers are not only destructive of superstition, which arises from a vain fear of the gods, but of religion also, which consists in a pious adoration of them. What think you of those, who have asserted that the whole doctrine concerning the immortal gods was the invention of politicians, whose view was to govern that part of the community by religion, which reason could not influence? Are not their opinions subversive of all religion? Or what religion did Prodicus the Chian[g] leave, who held that everything beneficial to human life should be numbered amongst the gods? Were not they likewise void of religion, who taught that the deities, at present the object of our prayers and adoration, were valiant, illustrious, and mighty men, who arose to divinity after death? Euhemerus[h], whom our Ennius translated and followed more than other authors, hath particularly advanced this doctrine, and treated of the deaths and burials of the gods; whether then may he be said to have confirmed religion, or to have totally subverted it? I shall say nothing of that sacred and august Eleusina[i], into whose mysteries the most distant nations were initiated, nor of those in Samothrace, or those in Lemnos[k], secretly resorted to by night, and surrounded

[g] He is called Προδικος ὁ Χιος, or Χειος, by Sextus Empericus, who names the sun, moon, the fountains, rivers, and fruits of the earth, amongst the divinities of Prodicus.

[h] A Greek historian, or rather relater of fables, mentioned by Lactantius and Minucius Felix as giving an account of the births, marriages, offsprings, exploits, countries, deaths, and burials of the gods.

[i] Ceres was called Eleusina, from a famous temple dedicated to her at Eleusis, near Athens.

[k] Lemnos is an isle in the Ægean sea, not far from Thrace, in Samothracia, where Cybele, the mother of the gods, was sacrificed to and ap-

by thick and shady groves; which, described as reason should direct, rather explain the nature of things than discover the knowledge of the gods.

Even that great man Democritus, from whose fountains Epicurus watered his little garden[l], seems to me to be puzzled about the nature of the gods. One while, he thinks that there are images endowed with divinity, inherent in the universality of things; another while, that the principles and minds contained in the universe are gods; then he attributes divinity to animated images, employing themselves in doing us good or harm; and lastly, to certain images of such vast extent that they encompass the whole outside of the universe; all which opinions are more worthy the country[m] of Democritus than of Democritus himself; for who can frame in his mind any ideas of such images? Who can admire them? Who can think they merit a religious adoration?

But Epicurus, in divesting the gods of the power of doing good, extirpates all religion from the minds of men; for though he says the divine nature is the best and most excellent, he will not allow it to be susceptible of any benevolence; by which he destroys the chief and peculiar attribute of the most perfect being; for what is better and more excellent than goodness and beneficence? To refuse your gods that quality is to say that man is no object of their favour, nor gods

peased with the blood of virgins. Vulcan, Mars, and other deities were likewise worshipped there.

[l] Epicurus taught his disciples in a garden.

[m] His country was Abdera, the natives of which were remarkable for their stupidity. The Abderites were used proverbially by the ancients, says Martial,

Abderitanæ *pectora plebis habes.*

of their regard; that they neither love nor esteem any one; in short, that they not only give themselves no trouble about us, but look on each other with the greatest indifference.

47 How much more reasonable is the doctrine of the Stoics, whom you censure! It is one of their maxims that "the wise are friends to the wise," though unknown to each other; for as nothing is more amiable than virtue, he who possesses it is worthy our love, to whatever country he belongs. But what evils do your tenets bring, who make good actions and benevolence the marks of imbecility? For, not to mention the power and nature of the gods, you hold that even men, if they had no need of mutual assistance, would be neither courteous nor beneficent. Is there no natural charity in the dispositions of good men? The very word charity is a term of love, from which friendship is derived[n]; and if friendship is to centre in our own advantage only, without regard to him whom we esteem a friend, it cannot be called friendship, but a sort of traffic for our own profit. Pastures, lands, and herds of cattle, are valued in the same manner, on account of the profit we gather from them; but charity and friendship expect no return. How much more reason have we to think that the gods, who want nothing, should love each other gratuitously, and employ themselves about us? If it be not so, why do we pray to, or adore, them? Why do the priests preside over the altars, and the augurs over the auspices[o]? What have we to ask

[n] This passage will not admit of a translation answerable to the sense of the original. Cicero says the word *amicitia* (friendship) is derived from *charum* (dear) and *amor* (love or affection).

[o] These interrogations are nothing to the purpose. The priests presiding

of the gods, and why do we prefer our vows to them? But Epicurus, you say, has written a book concerning sanctity. We are trifled with by one less qualified for writing than prone to scribbling; for what sanctity should there be, if the gods take no care of human affairs? Or what animated essence is there that regards nothing? Therefore our friend Posidonius has well observed, in his fifth book of the Nature of the Gods, that Epicurus believed there were no gods, and that what he said of them was only a finesse to avoid danger[p]; and really he could not be so weak as to imagine that the deity has only the outward lines of a simple mortal, without any real solidity; that he has all the members of a man, without the least power to use them; a certain thin, pellucid being, neither favourable nor beneficial to any one, neither regarding nor doing anything; for, in the first place, there can be no such being in nature; which Epicurus being conscious of, he allows the gods in words, and destroys them in fact; but, in the second place, if the deity be truly such, that he shows no favour, no benevolence to mankind, away with him! For why should I entreat him to be propitious? He can be propitious to none, since, as you say, all favour and benevolence are the effects of imbecility.

over the altars, the augurs over the auspices, which were divinations by the flight of birds, are no corroborations of any argument relating to the deity; nor more, indeed, is any outward show of religion.

[p] The laws of the Athenians were very severe against sceptics and atheists.

OF THE

NATURE OF THE GODS.

BOOK II.

WHEN Cotta had thus concluded, says Velleius, I was really inconsiderate to engage with an Academic, who is likewise a rhetorician; I should not have feared an Academic without eloquence, nor the most able rhetorician without that philosophy; for I am neither puzzled by an empty flow of words, nor the most subtle reasonings delivered without a grace. You, Cotta, have excelled in both. You only wanted the assembly and judges[a]. But enough of this at present. Now let us hear Lucilius, if it be agreeable to him. I had much rather, says Balbus, hear Cotta resume his discourse, and with the same eloquence show us the true gods, with which he has exploded the false; for on such a subject the loose unsettled doctrine of the Academy does not become a philosopher, a priest, a Cotta, whose opinions should be, like those we[b] hold, firm

[a] It was a custom amongst the Romans to appoint judges in public disputes and other exercises; and to him who was declared the victor some mark of honour was given: but this dispute was in private at a friend's house.

[b] We Stoics. The Stoics were so called from the Greek word στοα, a porch, in which Zeno taught his followers. Though the followers of Zeno were thus called from this circumstance, yet other philosophers likewise taught and disputed in porticos, which were long buildings supported by pillars and furnished with benches.

and certain. Epicurus has been more than sufficiently refuted; but I would willingly hear your own sentiments, Cotta. Do you forget, replies Cotta, what I at first said, that it is easier for me, especially on this point, to attack the opinions of another than to fix my own. Nay, though I had something remaining that might be clear, yet, having been so large already, I would now hear you speak in your turn. I submit, says Balbus, and shall be very brief; for as you have confuted the errors of Epicurus, my part in the dispute will be the shorter.

Our sect divide the whole question concerning the immortal gods into four parts. First, that there are gods; secondly, what they are; thirdly, that the universe is governed by them; and lastly, that they regard mankind in particular. Let us enter on the first two articles, and defer the last to another opportunity, as they require more time to discuss. By no means, says Cotta; for we are now masters of our time[c], and, though business required our attention, the present affair ought not to be postponed.

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than the nature of the gods, because men enjoy various kinds of pleasures; but those you look on as superficial, which delight the senses only by a titillation, as Epicurus calls it. What end is there of this trifling? Even Philo, who followed the Academy, could not bear to hear the soft and luscious delights of the Epicureans despised; for he perfectly remembered and repeated many sentences of Epicurus in the very words in which they were written. He likewise recited many, which were more gross, from Metrodorus, the sage colleague of Epicurus, who blamed his brother Timocrates, because he would not allow that a happy life consists in pampering the belly; nor has he done it once only, but often. You grant what I say, I perceive; for you know it to be true. I can produce the books if you should deny it; but I do not now undertake to oppose your reducing all things to pleasure: that is another question. What I am now showing is, that your gods are void of pleasure, and therefore, according to your own manner of reasoning, they are not happy. But they are free from pain. Is that sufficient for beings who are supposed to enjoy all good things, and the most supreme felicity? The deity, they say, is constantly meditating on his own happiness, having no other idea in his mind. Consider a little; reflect what a figure the deity would make, idly thinking of nothing through all eternity but "It is very well with me, and I am happy;" nor do I see why this happy deity should not fear being destroyed, since without any intermission he is drove and agitated by an everlasting incursion of atoms, and from whom images are constantly flowing. Your deity, therefore, is neither happy nor eternal. Epicurus, it seems, has written books con-

cerning sanctity and piety to the gods. But how does he speak on these subjects? You would say, that you heard Coruncanius or Scævola, the high priests, and not him, who tore up all religion by the roots, and who overthrew the temples and altars of the immortal gods, not with hands, like Xerxes[f], but with arguments; for, what reason is there that men should worship the gods, when the gods, as you say, not only do not regard men, but are entirely careless of everything, and absolutely do nothing? But they are, you say, of so glorious and excellent a nature, that a wise man is induced by their excellence to adore them. Can there be any glory in that nature which only contemplates its own happiness, and neither will do, nor does, nor ever did, anything? Besides, what piety is due to a being from whom you receive nothing? or how are you indebted to him who bestows no benefits? Piety, you say, is a justice towards the gods; but what right have they to it, when there is no communication between us? And sanctity is the knowledge of worshipping them; but I do not understand why they are to be worshipped, if we are neither to receive nor expect any good from them; and why should we worship them from an admiration only of that nature, in which we can behold nothing excellent?

You value yourselves upon being free from superstition, which is a consequence attending the disbelief of the divinity; for do you imagine Diagoras or Theodorus, who absolutely denied the being of the gods, could be superstitious? I do not suspect even Protagoras, who doubted whether there are gods or not.

[f] The destruction of the temples by Xerxes, when he invaded Greece, is related by Herodotus.

The opinions of these philosophers are not only destructive of superstition, which arises from a vain fear of the gods, but of religion also, which consists in a pious adoration of them. What think you of those, who have asserted that the whole doctrine concerning the immortal gods was the invention of politicians, whose view was to govern that part of the community by religion, which reason could not influence? Are not their opinions subversive of all religion? Or what religion did Prodicus the Chian[g] leave, who held that everything beneficial to human life should be numbered amongst the gods? Were not they likewise void of religion, who taught that the deities, at present the object of our prayers and adoration, were valiant, illustrious, and mighty men, who arose to divinity after death? Euhemerus[h], whom our Ennius translated and followed more than other authors, hath particularly advanced this doctrine, and treated of the deaths and burials of the gods; whether then may he be said to have confirmed religion, or to have totally subverted it? I shall say nothing of that sacred and august Eleusina[i], into whose mysteries the most distant nations were initiated, nor of those in Samothrace, or those in Lemnos[k], secretly resorted to by night, and surrounded

[g] He is called Προδικος ὁ Χιος, or Χειος, by Sextus Empericus, who names the sun, moon, the fountains, rivers, and fruits of the earth, amongst the divinities of Prodicus.

[h] A Greek historian, or rather relater of fables, mentioned by Lactantius and Minucius Felix as giving an account of the births, marriages, offsprings, exploits, countries, deaths, and burials of the gods.

[i] Ceres was called Eleusina, from a famous temple dedicated to her at Eleusis, near Athens.

[k] Lemnos is an isle in the Ægean sea, not far from Thrace, in Samothracia, where Cybele, the mother of the gods, was sacrificed to and ap-

by thick and shady groves; which, described as reason should direct, rather explain the nature of things than discover the knowledge of the gods.

Even that great man Democritus, from whose fountains Epicurus watered his little garden[l], seems to me to be puzzled about the nature of the gods. One while, he thinks that there are images endowed with divinity, inherent in the universality of things; another while, that the principles and minds contained in the universe are gods; then he attributes divinity to animated images, employing themselves in doing us good or harm; and lastly, to certain images of such vast extent that they encompass the whole outside of the universe; all which opinions are more worthy the country[m] of Democritus than of Democritus himself; for who can frame in his mind any ideas of such images? Who can admire them? Who can think they merit a religious adoration?

But Epicurus, in divesting the gods of the power of doing good, extirpates all religion from the minds of men; for though he says the divine nature is the best and most excellent, he will not allow it to be susceptible of any benevolence; by which he destroys the chief and peculiar attribute of the most perfect being; for what is better and more excellent than goodness and beneficence? To refuse your gods that quality is to say that man is no object of their favour, nor gods

peased with the blood of virgins. Vulcan, Mars, and other deities were likewise worshipped there.

[l] Epicurus taught his disciples in a garden.

[m] His country was Abdera, the natives of which were remarkable for their stupidity. The Abderites were used proverbially by the ancients, says Martial,

Abderitanæ *pectora plebis habes.*

of their regard; that they neither love nor esteem any one; in short, that they not only give themselves no trouble about us, but look on each other with the greatest indifference.

47 How much more reasonable is the doctrine of the Stoics, whom you censure! It is one of their maxims that "the wise are friends to the wise," though unknown to each other; for as nothing is more amiable than virtue, he who possesses it is worthy our love, to whatever country he belongs. But what evils do your tenets bring, who make good actions and benevolence the marks of imbecility? For, not to mention the power and nature of the gods, you hold that even men, if they had no need of mutual assistance, would be neither courteous nor beneficent. Is there no natural charity in the dispositions of good men? The very word charity is a term of love, from which friendship is derived[n]; and if friendship is to centre in our own advantage only, without regard to him whom we esteem a friend, it cannot be called friendship, but a sort of traffic for our own profit. Pastures, lands, and herds of cattle, are valued in the same manner, on account of the profit we gather from them; but charity and friendship expect no return. How much more reason have we to think that the gods, who want nothing, should love each other gratuitously, and employ themselves about us? If it be not so, why do we pray to, or adore, them? Why do the priests preside over the altars, and the augurs over the auspices[o]? What have we to ask

[n] This passage will not admit of a translation answerable to the sense of the original. Cicero says the word *amicitia* (friendship) is derived from *charum* (dear) and *amor* (love or affection).

[o] These interrogations are nothing to the purpose. The priests presiding

of the gods, and why do we prefer our vows to them? But Epicurus, you say, has written a book concerning sanctity. We are trifled with by one less qualified for writing than prone to scribbling; for what sanctity should there be, if the gods take no care of human affairs? Or what animated essence is there that regards nothing? Therefore our friend Posidonius has well observed, in his fifth book of the Nature of the Gods, that Epicurus believed there were no gods, and that what he said of them was only a finesse to avoid danger[P]; and really he could not be so weak as to imagine that the deity has only the outward lines of a simple mortal, without any real solidity; that he has all the members of a man, without the least power to use them; a certain thin, pellucid being, neither favourable nor beneficial to any one, neither regarding nor doing anything; for, in the first place, there can be no such being in nature; which Epicurus being conscious of, he allows the gods in words, and destroys them in fact; but, in the second place, if the deity be truly such, that he shows no favour, no benevolence to mankind, away with him! For why should I entreat him to be propitious? He can be propitious to none, since, as you say, all favour and benevolence are the effects of imbecility.

over the altars, the augurs over the auspices, which were divinations by the flight of birds, are no corroborations of any argument relating to the deity; nor more, indeed, is any outward show of religion.

P The laws of the Athenians were very severe against sceptics and atheists.

OF THE

NATURE OF THE GODS.

BOOK II.

WHEN Cotta had thus concluded, says Velleius, I was really inconsiderate to engage with an Academic, who is likewise a rhetorician; I should not have feared an Academic without eloquence, nor the most able rhetorician without that philosophy; for I am neither puzzled by an empty flow of words, nor the most subtle reasonings delivered without a grace. You, Cotta, have excelled in both. You only wanted the assembly and judges[a]. But enough of this at present. Now let us hear Lucilius, if it be agreeable to him. I had much rather, says Balbus, hear Cotta resume his discourse, and with the same eloquence show us the true gods, with which he has exploded the false; for on such a subject the loose unsettled doctrine of the Academy does not become a philosopher, a priest, a Cotta, whose opinions should be, like those we[b] hold, firm

[a] It was a custom amongst the Romans to appoint judges in public disputes and other exercises; and to him who was declared the victor some mark of honour was given: but this dispute was in private at a friend's house.

[b] We Stoics. The Stoics were so called from the Greek word στοα, a porch, in which Zeno taught his followers. Though the followers of Zeno were thus called from this circumstance, yet other philosophers likewise taught and disputed in porticos, which were long buildings supported by pillars and furnished with benches.

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What do predictions and foreknowledge mean but that future events are shown, pointed out, portended, and foretold to men? From whence they are called ostents, signs, portents, prodigies. But though we should esteem fabulous what is said of Mopsus, Tiresias, Amphiaraus, Calchas, and Helenus[n], who would not have been delivered down to us as augurs even in fable, if their art had been despised, are we not sufficiently apprised of the power of the gods by domestic examples? Will not the temerity of P. Claudius, in the first Punic war, affect us? who, when the poultry were let out of the coop and would not feed[o], ordered them to be thrown into the water, and, joking upon the gods, said, with a sneer, let them drink since they will not eat; which piece of ridicule, being followed by a victory over his fleet, cost him many tears, and brought great calamity on the Roman people. Did not his colleague Junius, in the same war, lose his fleet in a tempest by disregarding[p] the auspices? Claudius

things can never admit of! It is surprising that the Stoics, who had so just a sense of rectitude of action, and who saw so nicely into the relations in which we stand to each other, should maintain such evident absurdities. But why should we wonder at them any more than at several eminent catholic authors, whose works are chequered with beauties and deformities, with reason and sophistry, with morality and real impiety?

[n] These were all Greeks, some living a little before, and some at the time of the Trojan war.

[o] Their not eating was regarded as an unlucky sign; and Claudius's turning this superstitious observation on the poultry into ridicule is called, by Balbus, joking upon the gods. In the same manner a person in some countries would be accused of impiety if he should seem to ridicule any of the idle and impious stories which are esteemed miracles; for the weak and prejudiced part of mankind do not distinguish between speaking against God and against falsehoods told of God.

[p] Minds poisoned with superstition are too ready to ascribe effects to such causes as could no more produce such effects than they could make or unmake worlds.

therefore was condemned by the people, and Junius killed himself. Cœlius[q] says that P. Flaminius, from his neglect of religion, fell at Thrasimenus; a loss which the public severely felt. By these examples of destruction we may be assured that Rome owes her grandeur and success to the conduct of those who were tenacious of their religious duties; and if we compare ourselves to our neighbours, we shall find that we are infinitely distinguished by our zeal for religious ceremonies, though in other things we may be equalled if not excelled. Ought we to contemn Attius Navius's staff[r], with which he divided the regions of the vine to find his sow[s]? I should despise it if I were not satisfied

[q] Cœlius was an annalist. Livy gives an account of the defeat of C. Flaminius, who was consul. Hannibal destroyed him and his army of twenty-three thousand Romans, on the banks of the lake Thrasimenus, and took six thousand prisoners.

[r] *Lituus*, which is the word here, was a staff used by the augurs in their divinations, and is described by our author in his first book de Divinatione thus: "*Lituus* is a crooked staff, bending a little towards the top."

[s] This short passage would be very obscure to the reader without an explanation from another of Cicero's treatises. The expression here, *ad investigandum suem regiones vineæ terminavit*, which is a metaphor too bold, if it be not a sort of augural language, seems to me to have been the effect of carelessness in our great author; for Navius did not divide the regions, as he calls them, of the vine to find his sow, but to find a grape. The story is this, as it is told by Cicero himself in his first book de Divinatione: Attius Navius, having lost one of his sows, made a vow that, if he found her, he would offer the largest grape on his vine to the deity; accordingly, having found her, he stood in the midst of his vine, with his face towards the meridian, and divided the vine with his staff into four parts, and found a grape of a prodigious size. This story is followed by another a little more wonderful in the same book de Divinatione, where we are told that Tarquinius Priscus, hearing of this affair of the sow, sent for Attius Navius to see some proof of his augural art, and bade him cut a whetstone asunder with a razor, which he did before Tarquin and a great number of spectators, and was ever after held in the greatest esteem; upon which says Quintus, Cicero's brother, who is the person introduced disputing with our author on the subject of divination, if we deny all these let us burn our annals, and pronounce

that his predictions were verified by the victories of king Hostilius[t]; but by the negligence of our nobility the discipline of the augury is omitted, the verity of the auspices despised, and only a mere form observed; so that the most important affairs of the commonwealth, even the wars on which the public safety depends, are administered without any auspices[u]; the peremnia[x] are disused; no part of the acumina[y] performed; no select men called to receive the military testaments[z]; our generals now begin their wars as soon

the relations to be fictitious, etc. Hence we see what little credit ought to be paid to facts said to be done out of the ordinary course of nature. These miracles are well attested. They were recorded in the annals of a great people, believed by many learned and otherwise sagacious persons, and received as religious truths by the populace; but the testimonies of ancient records, the credulity of some learned men, and the implicit faith of the vulgar, can never prove that to have been, which is impossible in the nature of things ever to be.

[t] Our great author clashes with himself in this circumstance; for in his first book de Divinatione, which he wrote after this, he mentions Attius Navius as doing those miraculous acts in the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, who was after Tullus Hostilius.

[u] What I here, and in some other passages, call the auspices, are the auspicia, not the persons. I choose an English rather than a Latin termination, when the sense is as well preserved by it; for though the auspices are the persons in the original, the word may not improperly be used in English for the auspicia, especially as the person may easily be distinguished from the function by the context.

[x] The peremnia were a sort of auspices performed just before the passing a river.

[y] The acumina were a military auspices, and were partly performed on the point of a spear, from which they were called acumina.

[z] Those were called *testamenta in procinctu*, which were made by soldiers just before an engagement, in the presence of men called as witnesses. It was a custom to call men, whose names were thought propitious, such as Salvius, Staterius, Valerius, Victor, etc. Such persons as those are what Tully means when he says *nulli viri vocantur*. These *testamenta in procinctu* are called by the civilians, military testaments. *Procinctus* is the word used to express the state of an army in battle array, or a complete preparation to an action.

as they have placed the auspices. The force of religion was so great amongst our ancestors, that some of their commanders have, with their faces veiled, and with the strongest expression of sincerity, sacrificed themselves to the immortal gods to save their country[a]. I could mention many of the sibylline prophecies, and many answers of the aruspices, to confirm those things which ought not to be doubted. For example, our augurs and the Etrurian[b] aruspices saw the success of their decisions when P. Scipio and C. Figulus were consuls; Tiberius Gracchus, who was a second time consul, would have them rechosen, and the first rogator[c], as he was collecting the suffrages, fell down dead on the spot. Gracchus nevertheless went on with the assembly, but perceiving that this accident had a religious influence on the people, he brought the affair before the senate. The senate thought fit to refer it to those[d] who usually took cognizance of such things. The aruspices were called, and declared that Gracchus had no right to be rogator of the assembly; to

[a] Livy gives us an account of the death of a father and his son on such an occasion; which is a strong proof of the force of superstition amongst the heathens; but the Christians have generally set bounds to theirs, and rather choose to sacrifice the enemies of their superstitions, than sin against the great law of self-preservation.

[b] The Etrurians were particularly distinguished for those arts of divination which prevailed in Rome, the discipline being first introduced by them. Says our author, de Legibus, book ii. *Etruriæque principes disciplinam docento.*

[c] The rogator, who collected the votes, and pronounced the person chosen. This story, which is related by other authors, is superstitiously introduced here by Balbus, with a view to prove that there are judgments attending a non-observance of what he calls religious institutions. There were two sorts of rogators; one was the officer here mentioned, and the other was the rogator, or speaker of the whole assembly.

[d] i. e. The aruspices, as appears immediately after.

which, as I have heard my father say, he replied with great warmth; Have I no right, who am consul, and augur, and favoured by the auspicia? Do you, who are Tuscans and barbarians, because you have authority over the Roman auspicia, pretend to give judgment in our assemblies? He then commanded them to withdraw; but not long after wrote from his province[e] to the college[f], acknowledging that in reading the books[g] he remembered he had, according to the custom, pitched his tent, and had entered the pomœrium, in order to hold a senate, but that in repassing the same pomœrium[h] he forgot to auspicate; which neglect rendered the creation of consuls irregular. The augurs laid the case before the senate. The senate decreed they should resign their charge, which they accordingly did. What greater example need we seek for? The wisest, and perhaps the most excellent of men, chose to confess his fault, which he might have concealed, rather than leave the public the least cause for religious scruple; and the consuls to quit the

[e] Which was Sardinia, as appears from one of Cicero's epistles to his brother Quintus.

[f] Of soothsayers, etc.

[g] Their sacred books of ceremonies.

[h] The pomœrium was a place without the city, set apart for augural uses, and the like; near which a tent was pitched for the assembly at the election of consuls. In most editions of our author this tent is said to have been pitched in Scipio's gardens. It is an unnecessary addition, and I am of Dr. Davis's opinion, that it is not genuine. Valerius Maximus, who relates this account, and who also copies Cicero in the circumstances of the story, makes no mention of the gardens of Scipio. The reader must observe, that Gracchus entered the pomœrium before he went to the tent, and went through it as he returned; but the nice point, which he settled by consulting the books of ceremonies, was, that he should have consulted the auspicia when he returned through the pomœrium, as well as when he entered it, in his way to the tent.

highest office in the state rather than fill it a moment in defiance of religion. How great is the reputation of the augurs! And is not the art of the aruspices[i] divine? Innumerable are the facts of this kind; who, then, can doubt the existence of the gods? They who have interpreters must certainly exist themselves; now there are interpreters of the gods, therefore we must allow there are gods[k]. But it may be said, perhaps, that all predictions are not accomplished. We may as well conclude there is no art of physic, because all sick persons do not recover. The gods show us signs of future events; if we are deceived by them it is not to be imputed to the nature of the gods, but to the conjectures of men. All nations agree that there are gods; the opinion is innate, and, as it were, engraved in the minds of all men. The difference amongst us is what they are. Their existence no one denies.

Cleanthes, one of our sect, imputes the idea of the gods, implanted in the minds of men, to four causes. The first is what I just now mentioned, a preknowledge of future things. The second is the great advantages we enjoy from the temperature of the air, the fertility of the earth, and the abundance of various kinds of benefits. The third from the terror with which the mind is affected by thunder, tempests, storms, snow, hail, devastation, pestilence, earthquakes often attended with hideous noises, showers of stones, and rain like

[i] The functions of the augurs and the aruspices were different; the former was to divine by the flight of birds, and the latter by the entrails of victims.

[k] If the existence of a deity could be no better proved than by this argument, it could never be proved. Strange logic, that a man's bare pretensions to a knowledge of the divine will should be a proof of the truth of those pretensions, or of the existence of a deity!

drops of blood; by rocks and sudden openings of the earth; by monstrous births of men and beasts; by meteors in the air, and blazing stars, by the Greeks called *cometæ*[l], by us *crinitæ*, the appearance of which, in the late Octavian war[m], were foreboders of great calamities; by two suns, which, as I have heard my father say, happened in the consulate of Tuditanus and Aquillius, and in which year also another sun (P. Africanus) was extinguished. These things have terrified mankind, and raised an imagination of the existence of some celestial and divine power. His fourth cause, and that the strongest, is drawn from the regularity of the motion and revolution of the heavens, the distinction, variety, beauty, and order of the sun; the appearance only of which is sufficient to convince us they are not the effects of chance; as when we enter into a house, a school, or court, and observe the exact order, discipline, and method therein, we cannot suppose they are so regulated without a cause, but must conclude there is some one who commands, and to whom obedience is paid, so we have much greater reason to think that such wonderful motions, revolutions, and order of those many and great bodies, no part of which is impaired by the vast infinity of age, are governed by some intelligent being.

Chrysippus, indeed, had a very penetrating genius; yet such is the doctrine which he delivers, that he seems rather to have been instructed by nature, than

[l] They both signify hairy, or bearded. *Stella crinita* (some give *cincinnata*) is the same with the *cometa* of the Greeks, a comet.

[m] The war between Octavius and Cinna, the consuls. Octavius was slain by Cinna, who, in his fourth consulship, was stoned to death at Ancona.

to owe it to any discovery of his own. "If," says he, "there is anything in the universe which no human reason, ability, or power can make, the being who produced it must certainly be preferable to man; celestial bodies, and those of eternal order, cannot be made by man; the being who made them is therefore preferable to man. What then is that being but a god? If there is no deity, what is there better than man; since he only is possessed of reason, the most excellent of all things? But it is a foolish piece of vanity in man to think there is nothing preferable to him; there is therefore something preferable, consequently there is certainly a God."

When you behold a large and beautiful house, surely no one can persuade you it was built for mice and weasels, though you do not see the master; and would it not therefore be the height of folly to imagine that a world so pompously adorned, with the great variety and beauty of celestial bodies, and the extensive power and magnitude of the sea and land, was the peculiar appointment of man, and not the mansions of the immortal gods.

It is plain also, that the most elevated regions are the best, and that the earth, being the lowest, is surrounded with the grossest air; that as we perceive, in some cities and countries, the capacities of men are naturally duller from the thickness of the climate, so mankind in general are affected by the heaviness of the air which surrounds the earth, the grossest region of the world; yet even from this human understanding we may discover the existence of some intelligent agent that is divine, and wiser than ourselves; for, as Socrates says in Xenophon, from whence had man his

portion of understanding? Upon inquiry, it will appear that the heat and moisture diffused through our bodies, that terrene solidity of parts, and our vital spirit, arise from earth, water, fire, and air, in which we breathe. But where did we find that, which excels all, reason I mean, or (if you please, in other terms) the mind, understanding, thought, prudence? And from whence did we take it? Shall the world be possessed of all perfections except the principal? Certainly there is nothing better, more excellent, or more beautiful than the world, nor can we conceive anything to excel it; and if reason and wisdom are the greatest of all perfections, they must necessarily be a part of what we all allow to be the most excellent. Who is not convinced of the truth of what I assert from that agreeable, uniform, and continued agreement of things in the universe? Could the earth at one season be adorned with flowers, at another be covered with snow? Or, among so many things in constant variation, could the approach and retreat of the sun be seen in the summer and winter solstices? Could the flux and reflux of the sea be affected by the increase or wane of the moon? Could the different courses of the stars be preserved by the movement of the whole heaven? Could they subsist, I say, in such a harmony of all the parts of the universe, without the continued influence of a divine spirit?

If these points are handled in a free and copious manner, as I purpose to do, they will be less liable to the cavils of the Academics[n]; but the narrow confined way in which Zeno[o] reasoned upon them, laid them

[n] The Academics would not allow of the certainty of anything.

[o] The founder of the stoical sect.

more open to objection; for as running streams are generally pure, and standing waters easily grow corrupt, so a fluency of expression washes away the censures[P] of the caviler, while a discourse too concise is almost defenceless; for what I enlarge upon was thus briefly laid down by Zeno: That which reasons is preferable to that which does not; nothing is preferable to the world; the world therefore reasons. By the same rule the world may be proved to be wise, happy, and eternal: for all these qualities are preferable to their contraries; and nothing is preferable to the world; the world therefore is a deity. He goes on; no part of anything void of sense is capable of perception; some parts of the world have perception; the world therefore has sense. He proceeds, and pursues the argument closely; nothing, says he, that is void of life and reason, can generate a living and rational being; but the world generates living and rational beings; the world therefore is a living and rational being. He concludes in his usual manner with a simile; if well-tuned pipes are formed out of the olive tree, is it to be doubted that there is an innate skill of piping in the olive tree itself? Or if harmonious lutes are made out of the plane tree, is there not the same inference that music is inherent in the plane tree? Why then should we not believe the world is a living and wise being, since it produces living and wise beings?

[P] *Vitia* is the general reading, but I think a bad one; for how are the faults of the caviler washed away by the fluency of expression in his antagonist. Dr. Davis, therefore, proposes *convicia*; no injudicious emendation.

But as I am insensibly led into a length of discourse beyond my first design, (for I said the existence of the gods being evident to all, there was no need of any proof) I will demonstrate it by reasons deduced from the nature of things. It is a fact that all beings which take nourishment and increase, contain in them an efficacy of natural heat, without which they could neither be nourished nor increase. There must likewise be a regular and uniform motion in them. This motion is caused by the power of that heat or fire, and while it remains in us, sense and life are preserved, but the moment it abates and is extinguished, we ourselves decay and perish.

By arguments like these, Cleanthes shows how great is the force of heat in all bodies. He observes, that there is no food so gross as not to be digested in a night and a day; and that even in the excrementitious parts, which nature rejects, there remains a heat. The veins and arteries seem, by their continual motion, to resemble the agitation of fire; and when the heart of an animal is just plucked from the body, its palpitation is like a bursting flame. Everything therefore that has life, whether animal or vegetable, owes it to the heat inherent in it; from whence we may conclude that the vital efficacy, pervading the whole world, is the natural effect of that heat. This will better appear on a more close explanation of this fiery quality, which vivifies all things.

I shall therefore touch upon the most considerable parts of the world, which are sustained by heat; and first, it may be observed in earthly substances, that fire is produced from stones by striking one against another;

that the warm earth smokes[q] when just turned up, and that water is drawn warm from well-springs, especially in winter, because the great heat in the bosom of the earth, being then more dense, contracts the fire within it. Many reasons may be given to show that everything which the earth contains, and every seed within it, owes its production and growth to that temperament of heat.

Even water hath a mixture of heat in it, without which it would neither be liquid nor fluid; for it would not congeal by cold, it would not turn into ice and snow, and return again to its natural state without the power of heat inherent it; as by northern and other cold winds it is frozen, so it dissolves and melts again by heat. The seas likewise we find, when agitated by winds, grow warm, from the heat included in that vast body of water; for we cannot imagine it to be external and adventitious, but stirred up by agitation from the deep recesses of the seas, as our bodies grow warm with motion and exercise.

The air, which indeed is the coldest element, is by no means void of heat; for there is a great quantity arising from the exhalations of water, which appears to be a sort of steam occasioned by its internal heat, like that of boiling liquors.

The fourth part of the universe is entirely fire, and is the source of the salutary and vital heat in the rest.

From hence we may conclude, that, as all parts of the world are sustained by heat, the world itself has so long subsisted from the same cause; and the rather,

[q] This, in the original, is a fragment of an old Latin verse:

———*Terram fumare calentem.*

because it is observable that it communicates to all nature a generative virtue, to which all animals and vegetables must necessarily owe their birth and increase.

This consequently is the cause that continues and preserves the world; and, indeed, it is not destitute of sense and reason; for in every essence that is not simple, but composed of several parts, there must be some predominant quality; in man it is reason, and in beasts something resembling it. As for trees, and all the vegetable produce of the earth, it is thought to be in their roots. I call that the predominant quality[r], which the Greeks call Ἡγεμονικὸν; which must and ought to be the most excellent, wherever it is found. That, therefore, in which this prevailing quality resides, must be the most excellent, and most worthy the power and preeminence over all things. There is nothing in being that is not a part of the universe; and as there are sense and reason in the parts of it, the superior part must consequently have them in a more eminent degree. The world, therefore, must necessarily be possessed of wisdom; and that element which embraces

[r] The Latin word is *principatus*, which exactly corresponds with the Greek word here used by Tully; by which is to be understood the superior, the most prevailing excellence in every kind and species of things through the universe; that emphatical quality which stimulates everything to action in its respective sphere; that which is the cause of the first motions in all things, and which directs them to their intended ends, as reason in man, the sense of pleasure and self-preservation in all animals; that which stimulates all vegetables to growth and increase, by whatever name we may call it; and that in which the superior excellence of the superior being consists. Some part of the Stoic's argument to prove the world a deity, contains as clear a definition of what deity is, as is in the power of any heathen to give; that, says he, in which the superior excellence of universal nature consists, most deserves the name of deity, and must be the best of all things, and most worthy of power and preeminence.

all things must excel in perfection of reason. The world, therefore, is god, and the power of it is contained in that divine element. The heat also of the world is more pure, clear, and lively, and consequently better adapted to move the senses than the heat allotted us; and vivifies and preserves all things within the compass of our knowledge. It is absurd therefore to say that the world, which is endued with a perfect, free, pure, spirituous, and active heat, is not sensitive, since by this heat men and beasts are preserved, and move, and think, more especially since this heat of the world is itself the sole principle of agitation, and has no external impulse, but is moved spontaneously; for what can be more powerful than the world, which moves and raises that heat by which it subsists?

Let us hear Plato, who is regarded as a god amongst philosophers. He says there are two sorts of motion, one innate and the other external. That which is moved spontaneously, is more divine than that which is moved by another power; this self-motion he places only in the mind, and from thence concludes the first principle of motion is derived; therefore, since all motion arises from the heat of the world, and that heat not the effect of any external impulse, but of its own virtue, it must necessarily be a spirit or mind; from whence it follows that the world is animated. On such reasoning is founded this opinion, that the world is possessed of understanding, because it hath more perfections in itself than any particular being; for as there is no part of our bodies so considerable as the whole, so there is no particular being equal to the whole universe; from whence it follows, that wisdom must be an attribute of the world; otherwise man,

who is a part of the world, and possessed of reason, would be preferable to it. Thus if we proceed from the first rude unfinished beings to the most superior and perfect, we shall discover the nature of the gods. For we observe that nature extends her bounty to vegetables no farther than is sufficient for their nourishment and increase. To beasts she has given sense and motion, and a faculty which directs them to what is salutiferous, and to shun what is noxious to them. On man she has conferred a greater portion of her favour; she has added reason to command his passions, to moderate some and to subdue others. In the fourth and highest degree are those beings, which are naturally wise and good, who, from the first moment of their existence, are possessed of right and unalterable reason, above the power of man to attain; a reason perfect and consummate, such only as can be ascribed to a deity, that is, to the world. There is no institution of things that is not designed for perfection. In a vine or in beasts we see nature, if not prevented, fulfils her destined course; and as in painting, architecture, and the other arts, there is a point of perfection, so with more reason we must allow it in universal nature. Many external accidents may happen to particular beings, which may impede their progress to perfection, but nothing can hinder universal nature, because she is the ruler and governor of all other causes. That, therefore, must be the fourth and most elevated degree, to which no other power can approach. Nature is possessed of this, and since she presides over all things, and is subject to no impediment, the world must necessarily be an intelligent, and even a wise being.

How great is their ignorance who dispute the perfection of that nature which encircles all things; or, allowing it to be infinitely perfect, who deny it to be animated, reasonable, prudent, and wise! Could it without these qualities be infinitely perfect? If it were like vegetables or brutes it would be of the lowest kind; and if it were possessed of reason, and had not wisdom from the beginning, the world would be in a worse condition than man; for man may grow wise, but the world, if it were void of wisdom through an infinite space of time past, could never acquire it. Thus it would be worse than man. But as that is absurd to imagine, the world must be esteemed wise from all eternity, and consequently a deity; since there is nothing existing that is not defective except the universe, which is fully complete and perfect in every part. Chrysippus very well says, that as the case is made for the buckler, and the scabbard for the sword, so all things except the universe were made for each other. The fruit of the earth for animals; and animals for man, as the horse for carriage, the ox for the plough; the dog for hunting and for a guard; and man to contemplate and imitate the world. Man is in nowise perfect, but a particle of perfection; but the world, as it comprehends all, and as nothing exists that is not contained in it[s], is entirely perfect. In what therefore can it be defective? It cannot want understanding and reason, the most desirable qualities. The same Chrysippus observes also, by similitudes, that every-

[s] It is evident that by *mundus* Cicero here means the universe; for it would be absurd to say of this globe, *nec est quicquam quod non insit in eo*. The Stoic means by the world—all above us, in which the celestial bodies, as well as the terraqueous globe, are contained.

thing in its kind, when arrived to maturity and perfection, is superior to that which is not; as a horse to a colt, a dog to a puppy, and a man to a boy; so whatever is best must exist in some perfect and consummate being. Nothing is more perfect than the world, and nothing better than virtue. Virtue therefore is an attribute of the world. Human nature, imperfect as it is, is possessed of virtue; with how much greater reason do we conceive it to be inherent in the world? If then the world hath virtue, it is wise also, and consequently a deity.

The divinity of the world being clearly perceived, we must acknowledge it likewise in the stars, which are formed from the brightest and purest part of the ether, without a mixture of any other matter; and, being altogether hot and transparent, we may justly say they have life, sense, and understanding. Cleanthes thinks it may be confirmed by the evidence of two of our senses, feeling and seeing, that they are fiery bodies; for the heat and brightness of the sun[t] far exceed any other fire, as it enlightens the whole universe; and we perceive that it not only warms, but even often burns; neither of which it could do, if it were not of a fiery quality. Since then, says he, the sun is a fiery body, and is nourished by the vapours of the ocean (for no fire can continue without some sustenance), it must be either like fire, which we use to warm us and dress our food, or like that in the bodies of animals. The fire which the convenience of life requires, devours and consumes everything wherever

[t] He is here attempting to prove the divinity of the stars, amongst which he reckons the sun, as appears by what he soon after says, *primusque sol, qui astrorum obtinet principatum*, etc.

it invades; on the contrary, the corporeal heat is salutary, and vivifies, preserves, cherishes, increases, and sustains all things, and is productive of sense; therefore, says he, there can be no doubt which of these fires the sun is like, since it causes all things in their respective kinds to flourish and arrive to maturity; and as the fire of the sun is like that in animated beings, the sun itself must be animated, and the other stars also, which arise out of the celestial ardour that we call the sky or firmament. Some animals are generated in the earth, some in water, and some in air; Aristotle[u] therefore thinks it ridiculous to imagine, that no animal is formed in that part of the universe, which is the most capable to produce them. The stars are situated in the etherial space, an element the most subtle, whose motion is continual, and whose force does not decay; where every animated being must have the quickest sense and the swiftest motion. The stars therefore being there generated, it is a natural inference to suppose them endued with such a degree of sense and understanding as places them in the rank of gods; for it may be observed that they who inhabit countries of a pure clear air, have a quicker apprehension, and a readier genius than those who live in a thick foggy climate[x]. It is thought likewise that the nature of the diet has an effect on the mind[y]; therefore it is probable that the stars are possessed of an excellent

[u] The passage of Aristotle to which Cicero here refers is lost.

[x] This has been a prevailing opinion in most ages and countries. Cicero, in his treatise De Fato, imputes the superior genius of the Athenians to the fineness of the air.

[y] This opinion too is not without its favourers. One of the reasons assigned by the Pythagoreans for their abstinence from flesh, was, that it helped to quicken the understanding.

understanding, because they are situated in the etherial part of the universe, and are nourished by the vapours of the earth and sea, which are purified by their long passage to the heavens.

But the invariable order of the stars plainly manifests their sense and understanding; for all motion, which seems to be conducted with reason and harmony, supposes an intelligent principle, that does not act blindly, variously, or leave the guidance to chance. This constant course of the stars from all eternity follows the direction of right reason, not in nature[z], nor in fortune (for fortune, being a friend to change, despises constancy), but they move spontaneously by their own sense and divinity.

Aristotle is not unworthy commendation in observing, that all motion is natural, forced, or voluntary. He

[z] Justus Lipsius is very large on the stoical doctrine of nature, providence, fortune, etc. and Dr. Davis and president Bouhier have spared no pains towards clearing this passage; but I think the context is sufficient to do it. By the constant course of the stars from all eternity, Balbus plainly means that motion is essential to them, and that they do not move by the common laws of gravitation, which he soon after calls moving by nature, or natural motion; but they move, he says, spontaneously, impelled by no power but their own. The Stoic uses the word *natura* sometimes in a general extended sense, as when he says, *in quo sit totius naturæ principatus*, by which he means the deity, in which the superior excellence of universal nature consists. Sometimes he uses it, as M. Bouhier observes, in a limited sense, as in the passage I am now upon, and elsewhere in the same book. Dr. Davis proposes *necessitatem* instead of *naturam*, and well observes, that the words *necessitas* and *fortuna* are in other places opposed by Tully to reason; and M. Bouhier says that the word *naturam* has been certainly substituted for some other word. Though I think that Dr. Davis's change of *naturam* for *necessitatem* would make the passage less liable to ambiguity; yet, as the first word is in all the known copies, and as it may be reconciled to sense by comparing it with the context, it ought not to be rejected; and Dr. Davis and M. Bouhier seem of the same opinion by keeping it in the text.

examined that of the sun, moon, and the other stars, whose motion being orbicular could not be natural; for by nature things are either carried downwards by their weight, or upwards by their lightness; nor can it be said they are moved against nature[a]; for what hath more force than the stars? It follows, therefore, that their motion must be voluntary. Whoever is convinced of this must discover great ignorance and impiety, if he denies the existence of the gods; nor is the difference great whether a man denies their existence, or deprives them of all design and action; for whatever is inactive seems to me not to be[b]. Their existence, therefore, appears so plain, that I can scarcely think that man in his senses who denies it.

It now remains that we consider what the gods are. Nothing is more difficult than to carry our thoughts from the directions of the eyes. This difficulty hath prevailed on the ignorant vulgar, and indeed on some philosophers[c] not unlike them, who never think of the gods, but in the image of the human figure; the weakness of which opinion Cotta hath so well confuted, that I need not add my thoughts upon it. But as the previous idea we have of the deity comprehends two things; the one, that he is animated; the other, that nothing in nature exceeds him; I do not see anything more consistent with this idea than to attribute a mind

[a] Here Balbus means again that universal nature, *in quo sit totius naturæ principatus;* therefore the stars, according to this doctrine, are eternally independent of every other nature.

[b] This is a strange doctrine, that whatever is inactive does not exist. It is a self-evident truth, that whatever fills a part of space exists, whether it be active or inactive.

[c] He means the Epicureans.

and divinity to the world[d], the most excellent of all beings. Epicurus may be as merry with this notion as he pleases; a man, not the best qualified for a joker, as not having the wit and sense of his country[e]. Let him say that a voluble round deity is to him incomprehensible; yet he shall never dissuade me from a principle which he himself approves; for he is of the opinion there are gods, in allowing that there must be a nature most excellently perfect. It is certain that the world is most excellently perfect. Nor is it to be doubted that whatever has life, sense, reason, and understanding, must excel that which is destitute of them. It follows then that the world has life, sense, reason, and understanding, and is consequently a deity. But this shall soon be made more manifest by the operation of this efficient cause.

In the mean time, Velleius, let me entreat you not to betray the great want of learning in your sect. The cone, you say, the cylinder, and the pyramid, are more beautiful to you than the sphere. This is to have different eyes from other men; but suppose they are more beautiful to the sight only, which does not appear to me, for I can see nothing more beautiful than that figure which contains all others, and which has nothing in it rough, nothing offensive, nothing cut into angles, nothing broken, nothing swelling, and nothing hollow; yet as there are two forms[f] most esteemed,

[d] Here the Stoic speaks too plain to be misunderstood. His world, his *mundus*, is the universe, and that universe is his great deity, *in quo sit totius naturæ principatus*, in which the superior excellence of universal nature consists.

[e] Athens, the seat of learning and politeness, of which Balbus will not allow Epicurus to be worthy.

[f] This is Pythagoras's doctrine, as appears in Diogenes Laertius.

the globe in solids (for so the Greek word σφαῖρα, I think, should be construed), and the circle, or orb, in planes (in Greek κύκλος); and as they only have an exact similitude of parts, in which any extreme is equally distant from the centre, what can we imagine in nature to be more just and proper? But if you cannot see this, because you have never touched that learned dust[g], would not physics inform you that this equality of motion and invariable order could not be preserved in any other figure? Nothing therefore can be more illiterate than to assert, as you do, that it is doubtful whether the world is round or not, because it may possibly be of another shape, and that there are innumerable worlds of different forms; which Epicurus, if he had learned that two and two are equal to four, would not have said. But while he judges of what is best by his palate, he does not look up, as Ennius says, to the palace[h] of heaven. For there are two sorts of stars[i]; one measuring their journey from east to west by immutable stages, never in the least varying from

[g] He here alludes to mathematical and geometrical instruments.

[h] Our grave Stoic is here a punster in the original. *Dum palato*, says he, *quid sit optimum judicat, cæli palatum, ut ait Ennius, non suspexit.* The word *palatum* was used by some of the Latin poets in the same sense with *cælum*; and we are told that the roof of the mouth was called *palatum*, from the resemblance, in form, that it bears to the roof of heaven. Balbus is more excusable for his pun, as he quotes it from old Ennius, than if it came directly from himself.

[i] Balbus here speaks of the fixed stars, and of the motions of the orbs of the planets. He here alludes, says M. Bouhier, to the different and diurnal motions of these stars; one sort from east to west, the other from one tropic to the other; and this is the construction which our learned and great geometrician and astronomer Dr. Halley made of this passage, when I consulted him about it. I dwell the less in my notes on the astronomical and anatomical passages of our author, because of my Inquiry into the Astronomy and Anatomy of the Ancients at the end of this work.

their usual course; the other finishing a double revolution also in a constant regularity; from whence we conceive the volubility of the world (which could not consist but in a globose form), and the rotundity of the stars.

The sun, the chief of all the planets, is moved in such a manner, that it illuminates alternatively one part of the earth, while it leaves the other in darkness. The shadow of the earth interposing causes night; and the intervals of night are equal to those of day. From the approaches and retreats of the sun arise the degrees of cold and heat. His annual circuit is in three hundred and sixty-five days, and near six hours[k]. At one time he bends his course to the north, at another to the south, which causes summer and winter, with the two seasons, one of which succeeds the decline of winter[l], and the other that of summer. To these four changes of season we attribute the productions both of sea and land.

The moon completes the same course every month which the sun does in a year. The nearer she approaches to the sun she yields the dimmer light, and when most remote she gives the fullest; nor are her figure and form only changed in her increase and in her wane, but her situation likewise, which is some-

[k] This mensuration of the year into three hundred and sixty-five days and near six hours (by the odd hours and minutes of which, in every fourth year, the *dies intercalaris*, or leap-year, is made) could not but be known, Dr. Halley assured me, by Hipparchus, as appears from the remains of that great astronomer of the ancients. I am inclined to think, that Julius Cæsar had divided the year, according to what we call the Julian year, before Cicero wrote this book; for we see in the beginning of it how pathetically he speaks of Cæsar's usurpation.

[l] Other authors have mentioned spring and autumn in this manner.

times in the north and sometimes in the south. By this course she has a sort of summer and winter solstices; and by her influence she contributes to the nourishment and increase of animated beings, and to the maturity of all vegetables.

But most worthy our admiration is the motion of those five stars, falsely called wandering stars; for they cannot be said to wander, which keep from all eternity their approaches and retreats, and have each their constant and established motions. What is yet more wonderful is, that sometimes they appear, and sometimes disappear; sometimes advance towards the sun, and sometimes retreat; sometimes precede, and sometimes follow it; sometimes they move faster, sometimes slower; and sometimes they do not stir in the least, but for a while stand still[m]. From these unequal motions of the planets, mathematicians have called that the great year[n], in which the sun, moon, and five wandering stars, having finished their revolutions, are found in their original situation. In how long time this is effected is much disputed, but it must be certain and

[m] Philosophers agree that the planets never stand still, but only seem sometimes to move faster, sometimes slower, from their elliptical motion; and the reason of their motions in curve lines is the attraction of the sun, or their gravitations towards it (call it which you please); and an oblique or sidelong impulse or motion. These two motions or tendencies, the one always endeavouring to carry them in a straight line from the circle they move in, and the other endeavouring to draw them in a straight line to the sun, makes that curve line they revolve in; by which they seem not to keep an equal motion, and sometimes to stand still. See Mr. Locke's Elements of Natural Philosophy, in a collection of pieces written by him, and printed for R. Francklin in Covent Garden.

[n] The words of Censorinus on this occasion are to the same effect. The opinions of philosophers concerning this great year are very different; but the institution of it is ascribed to Democritus.

definitive[o]. For the planet of Saturn (called by the Greeks Φαίνων), which is farthest from the earth, finishes his course in almost thirty years; and in his course there is something very singular; sometimes going before, sometimes behind; one while lying hid in the night, then appearing in the morning, and ever performing the same motions in the same space of time, is for infinite ages regular in these courses. Beneath this planet, and nearer the earth, is Jupiter, called Φαέθων, which passes the same orb of the twelve signs[p] in twelve years, and has the same variety in its course. Next to Jupiter is the planet Mars (in Greek Πυρόεις), which finishes its revolution through the same orb[q] in twenty-four months, wanting six days, as I imagine. Below this is Mercury (called by the Greeks Στίλβων), which performs the same course in little less than a year, and is never farther distant from the sun than the space of one sign, whether it precedes or follows it. The lowest of these five planets, and nearest the earth, is that of Venus (called in Greek Φωσφόρος). Before the rising of the sun it is called the morning-star, and after the setting the evening-star. It has the same revolution through the zodiac, both as to latitude and longitude, with the other planets, in a year, and is never more than two[r] signs from the sun, whether it precedes

[o] Here he endeavours to prove the necessity of a certain and definitive conversion of the sun, moon, and five wandering stars, by which the great year is completed.

[p] The zodiac.

[q] Though Mars is said to hold his orb in the zodiac with the rest, and to finish his revolution through the same orb (that is, the zodiac) with the other two, yet Balbus means in a different line of the zodiac.

[r] According to late observations it never goes but a sign and a half from the sun.

or follows it. I cannot therefore conceive that this constant course of the planets, this just agreement in such various motions, through all eternity, can be preserved without a mind, reason, and consideration; and since we may perceive them in the stars, we cannot but place them in the rank of gods.

Those which are called the fixed stars, have the same indications of reason and prudence. Their motion is daily, regular, and constant. They do not move with the sky, nor have they any adhesion to the firmament, as they who are ignorant of physics affirm. For the sky, which is thin, transparent, and of an equal heat, does not seem by its nature to have power to whirl about the stars, or to be proper to contain them. The fixed stars therefore have their own sphere, separate and free from any conjunction with the sky[s]. Their perpetual courses, with that admirable and incredible constancy, so plainly declare a divine power and mind to be in them, that he who cannot perceive their divinity must be incapable of perception.

In the heavens therefore there is nothing fortuitous, unadvised, inconstant, or variable; all there is order, truth, reason, and constancy, without which all things are counterfeit, deceitful, and erroneous, and have their residence about the earth[t], beneath the moon, the lowest of all the planets. He therefore must be void of all reason who will not allow it in the stars, whose

[s] The Stoic here distinguishes the zodiac (which is but a supposed, a given, circle), and the spaces in which the fixed stars are contained, by making one part sky, and the other not sky.

[t] These, Dr. Davis says, are aerial fires, concerning which he refers to the second book of Pliny.

order and constancy are so wonderful, and to which are owing the life and preservation of all beings.

I think then I shall not deceive myself in maintaining this dispute upon the principle of Zeno, who went the farthest in his search after truth. He defines nature to be an artificial fire[u], proceeding in a regular way to generation; for he thinks, that to create and beget properly belong to art, and that what may be wrought by the hands of our artificers is much more skilfully performed by nature; that is, by this artificial fire, which is the master of all other arts.

According to this manner of reasoning, every particular nature is artificial, as it operates agreeably to a certain method peculiar to itself; but that universal nature, which embraces all things, is said by Zeno to be not only artificial, but absolutely the artificer, ever thinking and providing all things useful and proper; and as every particular nature owes its rise and increase to its own proper seed, so universal nature has all her motions voluntary, has affections and desires (by the Greeks called ὁρμὰς) productive of actions agreeable to them, like us who have sense and understanding to direct us.

Such then is the intelligence of the universe; for which reason it may be properly termed prudence, or providence (in Greek πρόνοια), since her chiefest care and employment is to provide all things fit for its duration, that it may want nothing; and, above all, that it

[u] We find exactly the same stoical definition of nature in Diogenes Laertius: Πῦρ τεχνικὸν ὁδῷ βαδίζον εἰς γένεσιν. This nature of Zeno's amounts to the superior excellence of the universe, which the Stoic before spoke of.

may be adorned with all perfection of beauty and ornament.

I have hitherto spoken of the universal world, and also of the stars; from whence it is apparent that there is almost an infinite number of gods, always in action, but without labour or fatigue. For they are not composed of veins, nerves, and bones. Their food and drink are not such as cause humours, too gross or too subtile. Their bodies are not subject to the fear of falls or blows, or in danger of diseases from a weariness of limbs. Epicurus, to secure his gods from such accidents, has made them only sketches[x] of deities, void of action; but our gods, of the most beautiful form, and situated in the purest region of the heavens, dispose and rule their course in such a manner, that they seem to contribute to the support and preservation of all beings.

Besides these, there are many other natures which have with reason been deified by the wisest Grecians and by our ancestors, in consideration of the benefits derived from them; for they were persuaded that whatever was of great utility to human kind must proceed from divine goodness, and the name of the deity was applied to that which the deity produced, as when

[x] This metaphor is taken from painters, who call that *monogrammum* which has only the outlines without any colouring; therefore *monogrammi dei* may very properly be called sketches of deities, agreeably to Velleius the Epicurean's description of the gods in the first book; a similar description to which we have in Lucretius:

Tenuis enim natura deûm, longeque remota
Sensibus ab nostris, animi vix mente videtur.

we call corn Ceres, and wine Bacchus; whence that saying of Terence[y],

Without Ceres and Bacchus Venus starves.

And that also in which there was any singular virtue was nominated a deity, as Faith[z] and Wisdom, which are placed amongst the divinities in the capitol; the last by Æmilius Scaurus; but Faith was consecrated before by Atilius Calatinus. You see the temple of Virtue and that of Honour repaired by M. Marcellus, erected formerly, in the Ligurian war, by Q. Maximus. Shall I mention those dedicated to Help, Safety, Concord, Liberty, and Victory, which have been called deities, because their efficacy has been so great as could not have proceeded but from some divine power? In like manner are the names of Cupid, Volupia[a], and of Lubentine Venus consecrated, though they are things vicious and not natural[b], whatever Velleius may think to the contrary, for they frequently stimulate nature in too violent a manner.

Everything, then, from which any great utility pro-

[y] In the Eunuch of Terence,

Sine Cerere et Libero, friget Venus.

[z] *Fides*; by which are understood confidence, trust, and the most exalted notion of honour.

[a] *Voluptas* is the word used here by our author; but Pleasure was consecrated under the name of *Volupia*, as Dr. Davis observes from Varro, Macrobius, and Austin.

[b] He says they are not natural, because nature dictates what is right to us, and whatever is imprudent or prejudicial is contrary to the dictates of nature; agreeable to which are the words of Zeno in Diogenes Laertius, who there says, to live according to nature is to live according to virtue; for nature tells us that what is virtuous is advantageous.

ceeded, was deified; and indeed the names I have just now mentioned are declaratory of the particular virtue of each deity.

It has been a general custom likewise, that men who have done important service to the public should be exalted to heaven by fame and consent. Thus Hercules, Castor and Pollux, Æsculapius, and Liber, became gods (I mean Liber[c] the son of Semele, and not him[d] whom our ancestors consecrated in such state and solemnity with Ceres and Libera; the difference in which may be seen in our mysteries[e]. But because the offsprings of our bodies are called *liberi*, children, therefore the offsprings of Ceres are called *Liber* and *Libera; Libera*[f] is the feminine, and *Liber* the masculine); thus likewise Romulus, or Quirinus, for they are thought to be the same, became a god. They are justly esteemed as deities, since their souls subsist and enjoy eternity, from whence they are perfect and immortal beings.

But what has greatly contributed to the number of deities is the representing in human form divers parts of nature. This has supplied the poets with fables, and filled mankind with all sorts of superstition. Zeno hath treated on this subject; but it is more largely explained by Cleanthes and Chrysippus. All Greece was of opinion that Cœlum was castrated by his son Saturn[g], and that Saturn was chained by his son

[c] Bacchus. [d] The son of Ceres.

[e] The books of ceremonies.

[f] This *Libera* is taken for Proserpine, who, with her brother Liber, was consecrated by the Romans; all which are parts of nature in prosopopœias; Cicero therefore makes Balbus distinguish between the person Liber, or Bacchus, and the *liber* which is a part of nature in prosopopæia.

[g] These allegorical fables are largely related by Hesiod in his Theogony.

Jupiter. In these impious fables a physical, and not inelegant meaning is contained; for they would denote that the celestial, most exalted, and etherial nature, that is, the fiery nature, which produces all things by itself, is destitute of that part of the body which is necessary for the act of generation by conjunction with another. By Saturn they mean that which comprehends the course and revolution of times and seasons; the Greek name for which deity implies as much, for he is called Κρόνος, which is the same with Χρόνος[h], that is, a space of time. But he is called Saturn because he is filled with years[i], and he is usually feigned to have devoured his children; for time, ever insatiable, consumes the rolling years; but, to restrain him from immoderate haste, Jupiter has confined him to the course of the stars, which are as chains to him. Jupiter (that is, *juvans pater*) signifies a helping father, whom, by changing the cases, we call Jove[k], *a juvando.* The poets call him father of gods and men[l]; and our ancestors, the most good, the most great; and as there

[h] We have two English words in common use, and which are very significant, immediately derived from the Greek word Χρόνος; which are *crone* and *crony;* the first is used to express a very aged person, the other an old acquaintance.

[i] *Saturnus, quod saturetur annis.* Our learned Walker on this passage prefers *saturaretur* on the authority of several ancient copies. Dr. Davis chooses *faturetur,* as Lactantius in his Div. Inst. did before him; and when we are giving the derivation of the word *Saturnus,* I think *saturetur* is preferable, as being nearer *Saturnus* than *saturaretur.*

[k] Cicero means by *conversis casibus,* varying the cases from the common rule of declension; that is, by departing from the true grammatical rules of speech; for if we would keep to it we should decline the word Jupiter Jupiteris in the second case, etc. Tertullian, in his Apology, says, *Varro trecentos Joves, sive Jupiteres, inducebat;* Varro introduced three thousand Joves, or Jupiters.

[l] *Pater divúmque hominumque.* See page 70.

is something more glorious in itself, and more agreeable to others, to be good, that is beneficent, than to be great, the title of most good precedes that of most great. This then is he whom Ennius means in the following passage, before quoted;

> Look up to the refulgent heav'n above,
> Which all men call unanimously Jove.

which is plainer expressed than in this other passage[m] of the same poet;

> On whose account I'll curse that flood of light,
> Whate'er it is above that shines so bright.

Our augurs also mean the same when, for the thundering and lightning heaven, they say the thundering and lightning Jove. Euripides, amongst many excellent things, has this[n]:

> The vast, th' expanded, boundless sky behold,
> See it with soft embrace the earth enfold;
> This own the chief of deities above,
> And this acknowledge by the name of Jove.

The air, according to the Stoics, which is between the sea and the heaven, is consecrated by the name of

[m] The common reading is *planiusque alio loco idem*; which, as Dr. Davis observes, is absurd; therefore, in his note, he prefers *planius quam alio loco idem*, from two copies, in which sense I have translated it.

[n] *Sic hoc breviter* is the general reading here; but, as M. Bouhier very well observes, why *briefly*, when Euripides uses three verses to express that which Ennius did in one? The passage from Ennius is but one verse in the original, and from Euripides three, though they are more in my translation. The learned Frenchman proposes *sic hoc graviter*; but I think, with Dr. Davis, there is no occasion for either.

Juno, and is called the sister and wife of Jove, because it resembles the sky, and is in close conjunction with it. They have made it feminine because there is nothing softer. But I believe it is called Juno, *a juvando*, from helping.

To make three separate kingdoms, by fable, there remained yet the water and the earth. The dominion of the sea is given therefore to Neptune, a brother, as he is called, of Jove; whose name Neptunus (as *Portunus, a portu*, from a port) is derived *a nando*[o] from swimming, the first letters being a little changed. The sovereignty and power over the earth is the portion of a god, to whom we, as well as the Greeks, have given a name that denotes riches (in Latin *Dis*, in Greek Πλούτων), because all things arise from the earth and return to it. He forced away Proserpine (in Greek called Περσεφόνη), by which the poets mean the seed of corn, from whence comes their fiction of Ceres, the mother of Proserpine, seeking for her daughter, who was hid from her. She is called Ceres, which is the same as Geres, *a gerendis frugibus*[p], from bearing

[o] Cotta the Academic banters the Stoic, in the third book, for this derivation of Neptune from *nando*, and well observes, that if he thinks Neptune comes from *nando* there is no name that may not be explained, and the derivation found, even by a single letter. Cotta likewise, in the same book, shows the difficulties attending a physical interpretation of the mythology of the ancients; and he endeavours to render their theology doubtful. It is certainly very easy to find out interpretations of most of the fables of the ancients, which may seem natural, though such meanings never were intended by the mythologists themselves. Lord Bacon has gone as great lengths in this as any of the moderns in his little treatise *De Sapientia Veterum*; but what the sentiments of the ancients were on these fables can nowhere be known so well as from the ancients themselves, where they have left us any remains of their opinions on these subjects.

[p] From the verb *gero*, to bear.

fruit, the first letter of the word being altered after the manner of the Greeks; for by them she is called Δημήτηρ, the same as Γημήτηρ[q]. Again, he (*qui magna vorteret*), who brings about mighty changes, is called Mavors; and Minerva is so called because (*minueret* or *minaretur*) she diminishes or menaces. And as the beginnings[r] and endings of all things are of the greatest importance, therefore they would have their sacrifices to begin with Janus[s]. His name is derived *ab eundo* from passing; from whence thorough passages are called *jani;* and the outward doors of common houses are called *januæ*. The name of Vesta is, from the Greeks, the same with their Ἑστία. Her province is over altars and hearths; and in the name of this goddess, who is the keeper of all things within, prayers and sacrifices are concluded. The *di penates*, household gods, have some affinity with this power, and are so called either from *penus*, all kind of human provisions, or because *penitus incident*, they reside within, from which, by the poets, they are called *penetrales* also. Apollo, a Greek name, is called *Sol*, the sun; and Diana, *Luna* the moon. The sun is so named either because he is *solus*, alone, so eminent above all the stars; or because he obscures all the stars and appears alone, as soon as he rises. *Luna*, the moon, is so called *a lucendo*, from shining; she bears the name also of Lucina; and as in Greece the women in

[q] That is, mother Earth.

[r] We have a saying amongst us to the same effect, He that hath well begun hath half done; and the end crowns the work.

[s] Janus is said to be the first who erected temples in Italy, and instituted religious rites, and from whom the first month in the Roman calendar is derived.

labour invoke Diana Lucifera, so here they invoke Juno Lucina. She is likewise called Diana *omnivaga*, not *avenando*, from hunting, but because she is reckoned one of the seven stars that seem to wander[t]. She is called Diana, because she makes a kind of day of the night[u]; and presides over births, because the delivery is effected sometimes in seven or at most in nine courses of the moon; which, because they make *mensa spatia*, measured spaces, are called *menses*, months. This occasioned a pleasant observation of Timæus (as he has many). Having said in his history that the same night in which Alexander was born the temple of Diana at Ephesus was burned down, he adds, it is not in the least to be wondered at, because Diana, being willing to assist at the labour of Olympias[x], was absent from home. But to this goddess, because *ad res omnes veniret*, she has an influence upon all things, we have given the appellation of Venus[y]; from whom the word *venustas*, beauty, is rather derived than Venus from *venustas*.

Do you observe therefore that from things natural, and which were wisely and advantageously discovered, have arisen fictious and imaginary deities; which have been the foundation of false opinions, pernicious errors, and wretched superstitions? For we know the different forms of the gods, their ages, apparel, ornaments, their pedigrees, marriages, relations, and everything belong-

[t] *Stellæ vagantes.*

[u] *Noctu quasi diem efficeret.*

[x] Olympias was the mother of Alexander.

[y] Venus is here said to be one of the names of Diana, because *ad res omnes veniret*; but she is not supposed to be the same as the mother of Cupid.

ing to them, are reduced to a level with human weakness; for they are represented with our passions; with lust, sorrow, and anger; and, according to fable, they have had wars and combats, not only, as Homer relates, when they have interested themselves in two different armies, but when they have fought battles in their own defence, against the Titans and giants. These stories, of the greatest weakness and levity, are related and believed with the most implicit folly.

But, rejecting these fables with contempt, a deity is diffused in every part of nature; in earth under the name of Ceres; in the sea under the name of Neptune; in other parts under other names. Yet whatever they are, and whatever name custom hath given them, we ought to worship and adore them. The best, the chastest, the most sacred and pious worship of the gods is to reverence them always with a pure, perfect, and unpolluted mind and voice; for our ancestors, as well as the philosophers, have separated superstition from religion. They, who prayed whole days and sacrificed, that their children might survive them (*ut superstites essent*), were called superstitious; which word became afterwards more general. But they who diligently perused and, as we may say, read or practised over again[a] all the duties relating to the worship of the gods were called *religiosi*, religious, from *relegendo*, reading over again, or practising; as *elegantes*, elegant, *ex eligendo*, from choosing, or making a good choice; *diligentes*, diligent, *ex diligendo*, from attending on what we love; *intelligentes*, intelligent, from under-

[a] The word is *relegerent*; from which Balbus says they were called *religiosi*.

standing; for the signification is derived in the same manner. Thus are the words superstitious and religious understood; the one being a term of reproach, the other of commendation. I think I have now sufficiently demonstrated that there are gods, and what they are.

I am now to show that the world is governed by the providence of the gods. This is an important point which you Academics endeavour to confound; and, indeed, the whole contest is with you Cotta; for your sect, Velleius, know as little of this as of anything else. You read and have a taste only for your own books, and condemn all others without examination. For instance, when you mentioned yesterday[a] that prophetic old dame Πρόνοια, Providence, invented by the Stoics, you were led into that error by imagining providence was made by them to be a singular deity, that governs the whole universe; whereas it is only spoken in a short manner; as when it is said the commonwealth of Athens is governed by the council, it is meant of the areopagus[b]; so when we say the world is governed by providence it is meant of the gods. To express ourselves therefore more fully and clearly, we say the world is governed by the providence of the gods.

Be not therefore lavish of your railleries, which your sect has little of to spare, in ridiculing us; and truly, if I may advise you, do not attempt it. It does not

[a] Here is a mistake, as Fulvius Ursinus observes; for the discourse seems to be continued in one day, as appears from the beginning of this book. This may be an inadvertency of Cicero.

[b] The senate of the Athens was so called from the words Ἄρεως Πάγος, the village, some say the hill, of Mars.

become you; it is not your talent, nor is it in your power. This is not applied to you in particular, who have the education and politeness of a Roman, but to all your sect in general, and especially to your leader[c]; a man unpolished, illiterate, insulting, without wit, without reputation, without elegance.

I assert then, that the universe, with all its parts, was originally constituted, and has, without any discontinuance, been ever governed by the providence of the gods. This argument we Stoics commonly divide into three parts. The first is, that the existence of the gods being once known, it must follow that the world is governed by their wisdom. The second, that as everything is under the direction of an intelligent nature, which has produced that beautiful order in the world, it is evident that it is formed from animating principles. The third is deduced from those glorious works which we behold in the heavens and the earth.

First then, we must either deny the existence of the gods (as Democritus and Epicurus by their doctrine of images in some sort do), or, if we acknowledge there are gods, we must believe they are employed, and that in something excellent; nothing is so excellent as the administration of the universe; it is therefore governed by the wisdom of the gods. Otherwise we must imagine there is some cause superior to the deity, whether it be a nature inanimate, or a necessity agitated by a mighty force, that produces those beautiful works which we behold. The nature of the gods would then be neither supreme nor excellent, if you subject it to that necessity, or to that nature, by which you would make the heaven,

[c] Epicurus.

the earth, and the seas to be governed. But there is nothing superior to the deity; the world therefore must be governed by him; consequently the deity is under no obedience or subjection to any nature, but rules all nature himself.

In effect, if we allow the gods have understanding, we allow also their providence, which regards the most important things; for, can they be ignorant of those important things, and how they are to be conducted and preserved, or do they want power to sustain and direct them? Ignorance is inconsistent with the nature of the gods, and imbecility is repugnant to their majesty. From whence it follows, as we assert, that the world is governed by the providence of the gods.

But supposing what is certain, that there are gods, they must be animated, and not only animated, but reasonable, united as we may say in a civil agreement and society, and governing together one universe, as a republic or city. Thus the same reason, the same verity, the same law, which ordains good and prohibits evil, is in the gods as in men. From them consequently we have prudence and understanding; for which reason our ancestors erected temples to the Mind, Faith, Virtue, and Concord. Shall we not then allow the gods to have these perfections, since we worship the sacred and august images of them? But if understanding, faith, virtue, and concord, reside in human kind, how could they come on earth unless from heaven? And if we are possessed of wisdom, reason, and prudence, the gods must have the same qualities in a greater degree; and not only have them, but employ them in the best and greatest works; the universe is the best and greatest work; therefore it

must be governed by the wisdom and providence of the gods.

Lastly, as we have sufficiently shown that those glorious and luminous bodies we behold are deities, I mean the sun, the moon, the fixed and wandering stars, the firmament, and the world itself, as also those things which have any singular virtue, and are of great utility to human kind, it follows that all things are governed by providence and a divine mind. But enough has been said on the first part.

It is now incumbent on me to prove that all things are subjected to nature, and most beautifully directed by her. But first, it is proper to explain precisely what that nature is, in order to the more easy understanding what I would demonstrate.

Some think that nature is a certain irrational power exciting in bodies the necessary motions; others, that it is an intelligent power, acting by order and method, designing some end in every cause, and always aiming at that end; whose works express such skill, as no art, no hand, can imitate; for, they say, such is the virtue of its seed, that, however small it is, if it falls into a place proper for its reception, and meets with matter conducive to its nourishment and increase, it forms and produces everything in its respective kind, either vegetables, which receive their nourishment from their roots, or animals, endowed with motion, sense, appetite, and abilities to beget their likeness. Some apply the word nature to everything; as Epicurus, who acknowledges no cause, but atoms, a void, and their accidents. But when we[d] say that nature forms and governs the

[d] The Stoics.

world, we do not apply it to a clod of earth, or a piece of stone, or anything of that sort, whose parts have not the necessary cohesion[e]; but to a tree, an animal, in which there is not the appearance of chance, but of order, and a resemblance of art.

23 But if the art of nature gives life and increase to vegetables, without doubt it supports the earth itself; for, being impregnated with seeds, she produces every kind of vegetable, and embracing their roots, she nourishes and increases them; while in her turn she receives her nourishment from the other elements, and, by her exhalations, gives proper sustenance to the air, the sky, and all the superior bodies.

If nature gives vigour and support to the earth, by the same reason she has an influence over the rest of the world; for as the earth gives nourishment to vegetables, so the air is the preservation of animals. The air sees with us, hears with us, and utters sounds with us; without it there would be no seeing, hearing, or sounding. It even moves with us; for wherever we go, whatever motion we make, it seems to retire and give place to us.

That which inclines to the centre, that which rises from it to the surface, and that which rolls about the centre, constitute the universal world, and make one entire nature; and as there are four sorts of bodies, the continuance of nature is caused by their reciprocal

[e] By *nulla cohærendi natura*, if it is the right, as it is the common reading, Cicero must mean the same as by *nulla crescendi natura* or *coalescendi*, either of which Lambinus proposes; for, as the same learned critic well observes, is there not a cohesion of parts in a clod or in a piece of stone? Our learned Walker proposes *sola cohærendi natura*, which mends the sense very much; and I wish he had the authority of any copy for it.

changes; for the water arises from the earth, the air from the water, and the fire from the air; and backwards again, the air from fire, the water from the air, and from the water the earth, the lowest of the four elements, of which all beings are formed. Thus by their continual motions backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, the conjunction of the several parts of the universe is preserved; an union which, in the beauty which we now behold it, must be sempiternal, or at least of a very long duration, and almost for an infinite space of time; and, whichever it is, the universe must of consequence be governed by nature. For what art of war, or of navigation, and, to instance the produce of nature, what vine, what tree, what animated form and conformation of their members, give us so great an indication of skill as appears in the universe? Therefore, we must either deny that there is the least trace of an intelligent nature, or acknowledge that the world is governed by it.

But since the universe contains all particular beings as well as their seeds, can we say it is not itself governed by nature? That would be the same as saying that the teeth and the beard of man are the work of nature, but that the man himself is not. Thus the effect would be understood to be greater than the cause. Now the universe sows, as I may say, plants, produces, raises, nourishes, and preserves, what nature administers, as members and parts of itself. If nature therefore governs them, she must also govern the universe.

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been better. But that will never be; and whoever attempts to mend it will either make it worse or aim at impossibilities.

But if all the parts of the universe are so constituted that nothing could be better for use or beauty, let us consider whether it be the effect of chance, or whether, in such a state, they could possibly cohere, but by the direction of wisdom and divine providence.

Nature therefore cannot be void of reason, if art can bring nothing to perfection without it, and if the works of nature exceed those of art. When you view an image or a picture, you imagine it is wrought by art; when you behold afar off a ship under sail, you judge it is steered by reason and art; when you see a dial or water-clock[f], you believe the hours are showed by art, and not by chance; can you then imagine that the universe, which contains all arts and the artificers, can be void of reason, void of understanding?

If that sphere, lately made by our friend Posidonius, which shows the course of the sun, moon, and five wandering stars, as it is every day and night performed, was carried into Scythia or Britain; who, in those barbarous countries, would doubt that reason presided in that work? yet these people[g] doubt whether the universe, from whence all things arise and are made, is not the effect of chance, or some necessity, rather than the work of reason and a divine mind. According to them, Archimedes[h] shows more

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It turns the whirlpools up its force so strong,
And drives the billows as it rolls along.
The ocean's violence it fiercely braves;
Runs furious on, and throws about the waves.
Swiftly impetuous in its course, and loud,
Like the dire bursting of a show'ry cloud;
Or like a rock, forced by the winds and rain,
Now whirl'd aloft, then plung'd into the main.
But hold, perhaps the Earth and Neptune jar,
And fiercely wage an elemental war;
Or Triton with his trident has o'erthrown
His den, and loosen'd from the roots the stone;
The rocky fragment from the bottom torn,
Is lifted up, and on the surface borne.

At first he is in suspense at the sight of this unknown object; but on seeing the young mariners, and hearing their singing, he says,

Like sportive dolphins with their snouts they roar[k];

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As at first view the shepherd thinks he sees something inanimate and insensible, but afterwards, upon stronger marks, begins to figure to himself what it is; so philosophers, if they are surprised at first at the sight of the universe, ought, when they have considered the regular, uniform, and immutable motions of it, to conceive that there is some being, that is not only an inhabiter in this celestial and divine mansion, but a ruler and a governor, as architect of this mighty fabric.

Now, in my opinion, they[1] do not seem to think that the heavens and earth afford anything marvellous. The earth is situated in the middle part of the universe, and is surrounded on all sides by the air which we breathe (the word is originally Greek[m], but by our frequent use of it is now latinised). The air is encompassed by the boundless *æther* (sky), which consists of the fires above. This word we borrow also; for we use *æther* in Latin as well as *aer;* though Pacuvius thus expresses it:

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Can I but wonder here that any one can persuade himself, that certain solid and individual bodies move by their natural force and gravitation, and that a world so beautifully adorned was made by their fortuitous concourse? He who believes this possible may as well believe, that if a great quantity of the one-and-twenty letters[n], composed either of gold or any other matter,

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Aristotle[p] very well observes; "if there were men whose habitations had been always under ground, in great and commodious houses, adorned with statues and pictures, furnished with everything which they who are reputed happy abound with; and if, without stirring from thence, they should be informed of a certain divine power and majesty, and after some time the earth should open and they should quit their dark abode to come to us, where they should immediately behold the earth, the seas, the heavens; should consider the vast extent of the clouds and force of the

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Is he worthy to be called a man, who attributes to chance, not to an intelligent cause, the constant motions of the heavens, the regular courses of the stars, the agreeable proportion and connection of all things, conducted with so much reason, that our reason itself is lost in the inquiry? When we see machines move artificially, as a sphere, a clock, or the like, do we doubt whether they are the productions of reason? And when we behold the heavens moving with a prodigious celerity, and causing an annual succession of

the different seasons of the year, which vivify and preserve all things, can we doubt that this world is directed, I will not say only by reason, but by reason excellent and divine? For, in short, there is no need of seeking after proofs; we need only with speculation contemplate the beauty of those things which, we assert, are appointed by divine providence.

First, let us examine the earth, whose situation is in the middle of the universe[q], solid, round, and conglobular by its natural tendency; clothed with flowers, herbs, trees, and fruits; the whole in multitudes incredible, and with a variety suitable to every taste: let us consider the ever cool and running springs, the clear waters of the rivers, the verdure of their banks, the hollow depths of caves, the cragginess of rocks, the heights of impending mountains, and the spaciousness of plains, the hidden veins of gold and silver, and the infinite quarries of marble. What and how various are the kinds of animals, tame or wild? The flights and notes of birds? How do the beasts live in the fields and in the forests? What shall I say of men who, being appointed, as we may say, to cultivate the earth, do not suffer its fertility to be choked with weeds, nor the ferocity of beasts to make it desolate; who, by the houses and cities which they build, adorn the fields, the isles, and the shores? If we could view these objects with the naked eye, as we can by the contemplation of the mind, nobody at such a sight would doubt there was a divine intelligence.

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But how beautiful is the sea! How pleasant to see the extent of it! What a multitude and variety of islands! How delightful are the coasts! What numbers and what diversity of inhabitants does it contain; some within the bosom of it, some floating on the surface, and others by their shells cleaving to the rocks! While the sea itself, approaching to the land, so resembles its shores that those two elements appear to be but one.

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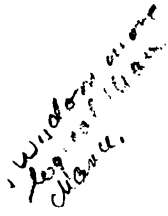

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world, we do not apply it to a clod of earth, or a piece of stone, or anything of that sort, whose parts have not the necessary cohesion[e]; but to a tree, an animal, in which there is not the appearance of chance, but of order, and a resemblance of art.

But if the art of nature gives life and increase to vegetables, without doubt it supports the earth itself; for, being impregnated with seeds, she produces every kind of vegetable, and embracing their roots, she nourishes and increases them; while in her turn she receives her nourishment from the other elements, and, by her exhalations, gives proper sustenance to the air, the sky, and all the superior bodies.

If nature gives vigour and support to the earth, by the same reason she has an influence over the rest of the world; for as the earth gives nourishment to vegetables, so the air is the preservation of animals. The air sees with us, hears with us, and utters sounds with us; without it there would be no seeing, hearing, or sounding. It even moves with us; for wherever we go, whatever motion we make, it seems to retire and give place to us.

That which inclines to the centre, that which rises from it to the surface, and that which rolls about the centre, constitute the universal world, and make one entire nature; and as there are four sorts of bodies, the continuance of nature is caused by their reciprocal

[e] By *nulla cohærendi natura*, if it is the right, as it is the common reading, Cicero must mean the same as by *nulla crescendi natura* or *coalescendi*, either of which Lambinus proposes; for, as the same learned critic well observes, is there not a cohesion of parts in a clod or in a piece of stone? Our learned Walker proposes *sola cohærendi natura*, which mends the sense very much; and I wish he had the authority of any copy for it.

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Lastly, in nature's administration there is nothing faulty. She produced the best out of those elements, which existed. Let any one show how it could have

been better. But that will never be; and whoever attempts to mend it will either make it worse or aim at impossibilities.

But if all the parts of the universe are so constituted that nothing could be better for use or beauty, let us consider whether it be the effect of chance, or whether, in such a state, they could possibly cohere, but by the direction of wisdom and divine providence.

Nature therefore cannot be void of reason, if art can bring nothing to perfection without it, and if the works of nature exceed those of art. When you view an image or a picture, you imagine it is wrought by art; when you behold afar off a ship under sail, you judge it is steered by reason and art; when you see a dial or water-clock[f], you believe the hours are showed by art, and not by chance; can you then imagine that the universe, which contains all arts and the artificers, can be void of reason, void of understanding?

If that sphere, lately made by our friend Posidonius, which shows the course of the sun, moon, and five wandering stars, as it is every day and night performed, was carried into Scythia or Britain; who, in those barbarous countries, would doubt that reason presided in that work? yet these people[g] doubt whether the universe, from whence all things arise and are made, is not the effect of chance, or some necessity, rather than the work of reason and a divine mind. According to them, Archimedes[h] shows more

[f] Nascia Scipio, the censor, is said to have been the first who made a water-clock in Rome.

[g] The Epicureans.

[h] Archimedes's sphere is mentioned by many of the ancients. It was made of glass, and represented the motions of the sun, moon, and other

knowledge in representing the motions of the celestial globe, than nature does in causing them, though the copy is so infinitely beneath the original.

The shepherd in Attius[i], who had never seen a ship, when he perceived from a mountain afar off the divine vessel of the Argonauts, surprised and frighted at this new object, expressed himself in this manner:

What horrid bulk is that before my eyes,
Which o'er the deep with noise aud vigour flies!
It turns the whirlpools up its force so strong,
And drives the billows as it rolls along.
The ocean's violence it fiercely braves;
Runs furious on, and throws about the waves.
Swiftly impetuous in its course, and loud,
Like the dire bursting of a show'ry cloud;
Or like a rock, forced by the winds and rain,
Now whirl'd aloft, then plung'd into the main.
But hold, perhaps the Earth and Neptune jar,
And fiercely wage an elemental war;
Or Triton with his trident has o'erthrown
His den, and loosen'd from the roots the stone;
The rocky fragment from the bottom torn,
Is lifted up, and on the surface borne.

At first he is in suspense at the sight of this unknown object; but on seeing the young mariners, and hearing their singing, he says,

Like sportive dolphins with their snouts they roar[k];

planets. See the Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients, at the end of this work.

[i] An old Latin poet commended by Quintilian for the gravity of his sense and loftiness of style.

[k] The shepherd is here supposed to take the stem or beak of the ship for the mouth, from which the roaring voices of the sailors came. *Rostrum* is here a lucky word to put in the mouth of one who never saw a ship before, as it is used for the beak of a bird, the snout of a beast or fish, and for the stem of a ship.

And afterwards goes on,

> Loud in my ears methinks their voices ring,
> As if I heard the god Sylvanus sing.

As at first view the shepherd thinks he sees something inanimate and insensible, but afterwards, upon stronger marks, begins to figure to himself what it is; so philosophers, if they are surprised at first at the sight of the universe, ought, when they have considered the regular, uniform, and immutable motions of it, to conceive that there is some being, that is not only an inhabiter in this celestial and divine mansion, but a ruler and a governor, as architect of this mighty fabric.

Now, in my opinion, they[1] do not seem to think that the heavens and earth afford anything marvellous. The earth is situated in the middle part of the universe, and is surrounded on all sides by the air which we breathe (the word is originally Greek[m], but by our frequent use of it is now latinised). The air is encompassed by the boundless *æther* (sky), which consists of the fires above. This word we borrow also; for we use *æther* in Latin as well as *aer;* though Pacuvius thus expresses it:

> ——— This of which I speak,
> In Latin's *cælum*, *æther* called in Greek.

A Grecian says this: indeed he speaks in Latin, but like a Greek; for, as he says elsewhere,

> His speech discovers him a Grecian born.

[1] The Epicureans.

[m] Greek, ἀήρ· Latin, *aer*.

But to return. In the sky innumerable fiery stars exist, of which the sun is the chief, enlightening all with his refulgent splendour, and is by many degrees larger than the whole earth; and this multitude of vast fires are so far from hurting the earth and things terrestrial, that they are of benefit to them; whereas if they were moved from their stations, we should inevitably be burned, through the want of a proper moderation and temperature of heat.

Can I but wonder here that any one can persuade himself, that certain solid and individual bodies move by their natural force and gravitation, and that a world so beautifully adorned was made by their fortuitous concourse? He who believes this possible may as well believe, that if a great quantity of the one-and-twenty letters[n], composed either of gold or any other matter,

[n] M. Bouhier is of opinion, that the Roman alphabet before Cicero's time consisted of these sixteen letters only, A, B, C, D, E, F, I, K, L, M, N, O, P, R, S, T, and that in Cicero's time these five were added, G, Q, U, X, and Z; and he refers us to his Dissertation on the old Greek and Latin Letters; but I am certain that the learned Frenchman is in error. How could he imagine that G was added to the Latin alphabet in Cicero's time, when Cicero himself here quotes two verses from Pacuvius the tragic poet, both which have the letter G in them; and Pacuvius flourished before Cicero? And how could he suppose Q or U to be added in Cicero's time, when they so often occur in Plautus and Terence, who wrote long before him. Some words, indeed, which afterwards began with Q, were before spelled with C, as *cotidie* and some others. X and Z were in the Latin alphabet before Cicero. H, which M. Bouhier does not make one of the sixteen, but calls it an aspirate, was certainly used before; for Catullus, who was contemporary with Tully, banters an affected person for being so attached to the spelling and pronunciation of his ancestors as to say *hinsidias* instead of *insidias*. The alphabet in Cicero's time had not, I believe, K, W, or Y, in it; and W was never received into the Latin alphabet; but we find some words in most editions of Cicero with Y in them, as in this book Cynosura, Arctophylax, Procyon, etc. the names of certain stars; yet I am inclined to think that Cicero wrote Cunosura, Arctophulax,

were thrown upon the ground, they would fall into such order as legibly to form the annals of Ennius. I doubt whether fortune could make a single verse of them[o]. How therefore can these people assert, that the world was made by the fortuitous concourse of atoms, which have no colour, no quality, no sense? or that there are innumerable worlds, some rising and some perishing in every point of time? But if a concourse of atoms can make a world, why not a porch, a temple; a house, a city; which are works of less labour and difficulty? But really they prate so inconsiderately concerning the universe, that they seem to me never to have contemplated the wonderful magnificence of the heavens, which comes next under my consideration.

Aristotle[p] very well observes; "if there were men whose habitations had been always under ground, in great and commodious houses, adorned with statues and pictures, furnished with everything which they who are reputed happy abound with; and if, without stirring from thence, they should be informed of a certain divine power and majesty, and after some time the earth should open and they should quit their dark abode to come to us, where they should immediately behold the earth, the seas, the heavens; should consider the vast extent of the clouds and force of the

Procuon, after Aratus, from whom he translated some verses, in which these names are Κυνόσουρα, Ἀρχτοφύλαξ, and Προχύων. In my opinion C was pronounced as K, and Ch was used as the Greek X.

[o] This idea of Cicero concerning the forming letters in metal is a clue that might lead to the present practice of printing, and may possibly have given the hint to the inventor or reviver of that art in Europe.

[p] The treatise of Aristotle from whence this is taken is lost.

winds; should see the sun, and observe his grandeur and beauty, and perceive that day is occasioned by the diffusion of his light through the sky; and when night has obscured the earth, they should contemplate the heavens bespangled and adorned with stars; the surprising variety of the moon in her increase and wane; the rising and setting of all the stars, and the inviolable regularity of their courses; when," says he, "they should see these things, they would undoubtedly conclude that there are gods, and that these are their mighty works." Thus far Aristotle. Let us imagine also as great darkness as was formerly occasioned by the irruption of the fires of mount Ætna, which are said to have obscured the adjacent countries for two days, that one man could not know another; but on the third, when the sun appeared, they seemed to be risen from the dead. Now, if we should be suddenly brought from a state of eternal darkness to see the light, how beautiful would the heavens seem! But, being daily accustomed to behold it, our minds are not affected, nor troubled to search into the principles of what is always in view, as if the novelty, rather than the importance of things, ought to excite our curiosity.

Is he worthy to be called a man, who attributes to chance, not to an intelligent cause, the constant motions of the heavens, the regular courses of the stars, the agreeable proportion and connection of all things, conducted with so much reason, that our reason itself is lost in the inquiry? When we see machines move artificially, as a sphere, a clock, or the like, do we doubt whether they are the productions of reason? And when we behold the heavens moving with a prodigious celerity, and causing an annual succession of

the different seasons of the year, which vivify and preserve all things, can we doubt that this world is directed, I will not say only by reason, but by reason excellent and divine? For, in short, there is no need of seeking after proofs; we need only with speculation contemplate the beauty of those things which, we assert, are appointed by divine providence.

First, let us examine the earth, whose situation is in the middle of the universe[q], solid, round, and conglobular by its natural tendency; clothed with flowers, herbs, trees, and fruits; the whole in multitudes incredible, and with a variety suitable to every taste: let us consider the ever cool and running springs, the clear waters of the rivers, the verdure of their banks, the hollow depths of caves, the cragginess of rocks, the heights of impending mountains, and the spaciousness of plains, the hidden veins of gold and silver, and the infinite quarries of marble. What and how various are the kinds of animals, tame or wild? The flights and notes of birds? How do the beasts live in the fields and in the forests? What shall I say of men who, being appointed, as we may say, to cultivate the earth, do not suffer its fertility to be choked with weeds, nor the ferocity of beasts to make it desolate; who, by the houses and cities which they build, adorn the fields, the isles, and the shores? If we could view these objects with the naked eye, as we can by the contemplation of the mind, nobody at such a sight would doubt there was a divine intelligence.

[q] To the universe the Stoics certainly annexed the idea of a limited space, otherwise they could not have talked of a middle; for there can be no middle but of a limited space; infinite space can have no middle, there being infinite extension from every part.

But how beautiful is the sea! How pleasant to see the extent of it! What a multitude and variety of islands! How delightful are the coasts! What numbers and what diversity of inhabitants does it contain; some within the bosom of it, some floating on the surface, and others by their shells cleaving to the rocks! While the sea itself, approaching to the land, so resembles its shores that those two elements appear to be but one.

Next above the sea is the air, diversified by day and night; when rarified it possesses the higher region; when condensed it turns into clouds, and, with the waters which it gathers, it enriches the earth by the rain. Its agitation produces the winds. It causes heat and cold according to the different seasons. It supports birds in their flight; and by respiration it nourishes and preserves all animated beings.

There now remains to be mentioned the heaven; a region the farthest from our abodes, which surrounds and contains all things. It is likewise called *æther*, or sky, the extreme bounds and limits of the universe, in which the stars perform their appointed courses in a most wonderful manner.

Amongst the stars, the sun, whose magnitude far surpasses the earth, makes his revolution round it; and by his rising and setting causes day and night; sometimes coming near towards the earth, and sometimes going from it; he every year makes two contrary reversions[r] from the extreme part; in his retreat the

[r] These two contrary reversions are from the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. They are the extreme bounds of the sun's course. The reader must observe, that the astronomical parts of this book are introduced by the Stoic as proofs of design and reason in the universe; and, notwithstanding the

earth seems locked up in sadness; in his return it appears exhilarated with the heavens.

The moon, which, as mathematicians[s] demonstrate, is bigger than half the earth, makes her revolutions through the same spaces[t] as the sun; from which she borrows the whole light which she communicates to the earth, and has those various changes in her appearance. When she is found under the sun and opposite to it, the brightness of her rays are lost; but when the earth directly interposes between the moon and sun, the moon is totally eclipsed.

The other wandering stars have their courses round the earth in the same spaces[u], and rise and set in the same manner; their motions are sometimes quick, sometimes slow, and often they stand still[x]. There is nothing more wonderful, nothing more beautiful.

There is a vast number[y] of fixed stars, distinguished

errors in his planetary system, his intent is well answered, because all he means is, that the regular motions of the heavenly bodies, and their dependencies, are demonstrations of a divine mind. The inference proposed to be drawn from his astronomical observations is as just as if his system was, in every part, unexceptionably right; the same may be said of his anatomical observations.

[s] Balbus says that the moon is bigger than half the earth, as mathematicians show. Though this was a prevailing error among some Stoics, the reader is not to suppose that there were no astronomers who knew better in that age. According to Ptolemey, whose system was well known in Tully's time, the moon is thirty times less than the earth; and later observations make it still less. Tycho Brahe makes it forty-two times less; some observers since him forty-three, and others forty-five.

[t] In the zodiac.

[u] Ibid.

[x] See p. 94, 95, and the note.

[y] Astronomers have differed about the number of fixed stars. They are called fixed stars because their distances are always the same; they are invariable. The completest catalogue of them is to be made out of Flam-

by the names of certain figures, to which we find they have some resemblance.

I will here, says Balbus, looking at me, make use of the verses which, when you were young, you translated from Aratus[z], and which, because they are in Latin, gave me so much delight that I have many of them still in my memory.

As then we daily see, without any change or variation,

> ——— the rest[a]
> Swiftly pursue the course to which they're bound;
> And with the heav'ns the days and nights go round;

the contemplation of which, to a mind desirous of observing the constancy of nature, is inexhaustible.

> The extreme top of either point is call'd
> The pole[b].

About this the two Ἄρκτοι are turned, which never set;

> Of these, the Greeks one Cynosura call,
> The other Helice[c].

steed's Historia Cœlestis, and Dr. Halley's Observations on the Southern Constellations.

[z] These verses of Tully are a translation from a Greek poem of Aratus, called the Phænomena. So complete a catalogue of the fixed stars is not to be expected from Aratus as from Mr. Flamsteed and Dr. Halley. There is no necessity for Balbus to mention all the constellations here which were known in Tully's time, because a part of them is sufficient to answer the end of the Stoic, whose endeavour is to show the impossibility of these bodies obeying the laws of motion without reason. See farther in the Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients.

[a] The fixed stars.

[b] The arctic and antarctic poles.

[c] The two Arctoi are northern constellations. Cynosura is what we call the Lesser Bear; Helice the Greater Bear; in Latin *Ursa Minor* and *Ursa Major*.

The brightest stars[d] indeed of Helice are discernible all night,

Which are by us Septentriones call'd.

Cynosura moves about the same pole, with a like number of stars, and ranged in the same order;

This[e] the Phœnicians choose to make their guide,
When on the ocean in the night they ride.
Adorn'd with stars of more refulgent light,
The other[f] shines, and first appears at night,
Though this be small, sailors its use have found;
More inward is its course, and short its round.

The aspect of those stars is the more admirable, because

The Dragon grim betwixt them bends his way,
As through the winding banks the currents stray,
And up and down in sinuous bendings rolls[g].

His whole form is excellent; but the shape of his head and the ardour of his eyes are most remarkable.

Various the stars, which deck his glitt'ring head;
His temples are with double fulgour spread;
From his fierce eyes two fervid lights afar
Flash, and his chin shines with one radiant star;
Bow'd is his head; and his round neck he bends,
And to the tail of Helice[h] extends.

[d] These stars in the Greater Bear are vulgarly called the seven stars, or the northern wain; by the Latins *Septentriones*.

[e] The Lesser Bear.

[f] The Greater Bear.

[g] Exactly agreeable to this and the following description of the Dragon, is the same northern constellation described in the map by Flamsteed in his Atlas Cœlestis; and all the figures here described by Aratus nearly agree with the maps of the same constellations in the Atlas Cœlestis, though they are not all placed precisely alike.

[h] The tail of the Greater Bear.

The rest of the Dragon's body we[i] see at every hour in the night;

Here[k] suddenly the head a little hides
Itself, where all its parts, which are in sight,
And those unseen, in the same place unite.

near to this head

Is placed the figure of a man that moves
Weary and sad,

which the Greeks

Engonasis do call, because he's borne[l]
About with bended knee. Near him is placed
The crown with a refulgent lustre graced.

This, indeed, is at his back; but Anguitenens, the Snakeholder, is near his head[m];

[i] That is in Macedon, where Aratus lived.

[k] The true interpretation of this passage is as follows, and agreeable to the construction which Dr. Davis and other learned men give. Here in Macedon, says Aratus, the head of the Dragon does not entirely immerge itself in the ocean, but only touches the superficies of it. By *ortus* and *obitus* I doubt not but Cicero meant, agreeable to Aratus, those parts which arise to view, and those which are removed from sight. These verses in the original Greek, and in the translations, are unintelligible to those who are entirely unacquainted with the figures and places of the constellations; nor are they easily to be understood by astronomers, without considering the author as writing in Macedon, and allowing for the opinion of the ancients, that the ocean is the horizon of the world.

[l] These are two northern constellations. Engonasis (in some catalogues called Hercules), because he is figured kneeling ἐν γόνασιν, on his knee; Ἐνγόνασιν καλέους', as Aratus says, they call Engonasis.

[m] The crown is placed under the feet of Hercules in the Atlas Cœlestis; but Ophiuchus (Ὀφιοῦχος), the Snakeholder, is placed in the map by Flamsteed as described here by Aratus; and their heads almost meet. The modern maps are not exactly answerable to this ancient description of the twisting of the serpent round the man; but as these given figures, which are chiefly derived from the ancients, are arbitrary, the science of astronomy does not suffer by such a difference in the figure of a constellation.

The Greeks him Ophiuchus call, renown'd
The name. He strongly grasps the Serpent round
With both his hands; himself the Serpent folds
Beneath his breast, and round his middle holds;
Yet gravely he, bright shining in the skies,
Moves on, and treads on Nepa's[n] breast and eyes.

The Septentriones[o] are followed by

Arctophylax[p], that's said to be the same
Which we Boötes call, who has the name,
Because he drives the Greater Bear along
Yoked to a wain.

Besides, in Boötes

A star of glitt'ring rays about his waist,
Arcturus call'd, a name renown'd, is placed[q].

Beneath which is

The Virgin of illustrious form, whose hand
Holds a bright spike[r];

[n] The Scorpion. Ophiuchus, though a northern constellation, is not far from that part of the zodiac where the Scorpion is, which is one of the six southern signs.

[o] The wain of seven stars.

[p] The wain-driver. This northern constellation is, in our present maps, figured with a club in his right hand, behind the Greater Bear.

[q] In some modern maps Arcturus, a star of the first magnitude, is placed in the belt that is round the waist of Boötes. Cicero says *subter præcordia*, which is about the waist; and Aratus says ὑπὸ ζώνῃ, under the belt.

[r] Cicero says, *cui* (that is, *Arcturo*) *subjecta fertur*

Spicum illustre tenens splendenti corpore Virgo.

Cicero has not justly translated his author here. Aratus says she is placed beneath the feet of Boötes,

Ἀμφοτέροισι δὲ Ποσσὶν——Βοώτου, κ. τ. λ.

and so the same constellation is placed in our modern maps. Boötes is a

and truly these signs are so regularly disposed, that a divine wisdom evidently appears in them;

Beneath the Bear's[s] head have the Twins their seat,
Under his chest the Crab, beneath his feet
The mighty Lion darts a trembling flame[t].

The Charioteer

On the left side of Gemini we see[u],
And at his head behold fierce Helice;
On his left shoulder the bright Goat appears.

But, to proceed,

This is indeed a great and glorious star.
On th' other side the Kids, inferior far,
Yield but a slender light to mortal eyes.

Under his feet

The horned Bull[x], with sturdy limbs, is placed;

his head is sprinkled with a number of stars;

These by the Greeks are call'd the Hyadès,

a pluendo, from raining, for ὕειν is *pluere* to rain; there-

constellation of the northern hemisphere, not far from the zodiac; and the Virgin is one of the six northern signs in the zodiac.

[s] *Sub caput Arcti*, under the head of the Greater Bear.

[t] The Crab is, by the ancients and moderns, placed in the zodiac, as here, betwixt the Twins and the Lion; and they are all three northern signs.

[u] The Twins are placed in the zodiac with the side of one to the northern hemisphere, and the side of the other to the southern hemisphere. Auriga, the Charioteer, is placed in the northern hemisphere, near the zodiac, by the Twins; and at the head of the Charioteer is Helice, the Greater Bear, placed; and the Goat is a bright star of the first magnitude placed on the left shoulder of this northern constellation, and called Capra, the Goat; Hædi the Kids are two more stars of the same constellation.

[x] A constellation; one of the northern signs in the zodiac, in which the Hyades are placed.

fore they are injudiciously called *Suculæ* by our people, as if they had their name a *suibus* from sows, and not from showers.

Behind the Lesser Bear, Cepheus[y] follows with extended hands,

> For close behind the Lesser Bear he moves.

Before him goes

> Cassiopea[z] with a faintish light;
> But near her moves (fair and illustrious sight!)
> Andromeda[a], who, with an eager pace,
> Seems to avoid her parent's mournful face[b].
> Th' Horse[c] shakes his glitt'ring mane, and seems to tread,
> So near he comes, on her refulgent head;
> With a star's help, that close to him appears
> A double form[d], and but one light he wears;
> By which he seems ambitious in the sky
> An everlasting knot of stars to tie.
> Near him the Ram, with wreathed horns, is placed[e];

[y] One of the feet of Cepheus, a northern constellation, is under the tail of the Lesser Bear in the map in Flamsteed's Atlas Cœlestis. See farther in my Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients.

[z] Grotius, and after him Dr. Davis, and other learned men, read *Cassiepea* after the Greek Κασσιέπεια, and reject the common reading Cassiopea. This is a ridiculous nicety; for as *Cassiopea* is generally used by Latin authors, and from the Latins by the moderns, it is proper the name should be so written; and I doubt not but Cicero wrote it so himself. They might with as much propriety have rejected *Arctophylax* and *Procyon* for *Arctophulax* and *Procuon*, because the Greeks wrote them Ἀρκτοφύλαξ and Προκύων, and so of many other words; and they who pay so nice a regard to the original ought to write *Cassiepeia*.

[a] These northern constellations here mentioned have been always placed together as one family, with Cepheus and Perseus, as they are in our modern maps.

[b] This alludes to the fable of Perseus and Andromeda. See farther in my Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients.

[c] Pegasus, who is one of Perseus and Andromeda's family.

[d] That is, with wings.

[e] Now all the six northern signs have been named in these verses of

by whom

The Fishes[f] are, of which one seems to haste
Somewhat before the other, to the blast
Of the north wind exposed.

Perseus is described as placed at the feet of Andromeda[g]:

And him the sharp blasts of the north wind beat.
Near his left knee, but dim their light, their seat
The small Pleiades[h] maintain. We find,
Not far from them, the Lyre[i] but slightly join'd.
Next is the Winged Bird[k], that seems to fly
Beneath the spacious cov'ring of the sky.

Near the head of the Horse[l] lies the right hand of Aquarius, then all Aquarius himself[m].

Then Capricorn, with half the form of beast,
Breathes chill and piercing colds from his strong breast,

Aratus, though not in the order in which they are placed in the zodiac. See farther in my Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients; in which the division of the heavens into the two hemispheres by the zodiac is treated of, as is the division of the zodiac into its dodecatemories, or twelve parts.

[f] Aries, the Ram, is the first northern sign in the zodiac; Pisces, the Fishes, the last southern sign; therefore they must be near one another, as they are in a circle or belt. In Flamsteed's Atlas Cœlestis one of the Fishes is near the head of the Ram, and the other near the Urn of Aquarius.

[g] He is so described in the Atlas Cœlestis.

[h] These are called Vergiliæ by Cicero, by Aratus the Pleiades, Πλειάδες; and they are placed at the neck of the Bull; and one of Perseus's feet touches the Bull in the Atlas Cœlestis.

[i] This northern constellation is called Fides by Cicero; but it must be the same with Lyra; because Lyra is placed in our maps as Fides is here.

[k] This is called Ales Avis by Tully; and I doubt not but the northern constellation Cygnus is here to be understood; for the description and place of the Swan in the Atlas Cœlestis are the same which Ales Avis has here.

[l] Pegasus.

[m] The Water-bearer, one of the six southern signs in the zodiac. He is described in our maps pouring water out of an urn, and leaning with one hand on the tail of Capricorn, another southern sign.

And in a spacious circle takes his round;
When him, while in the winter-solstice bound,
The sun has visited with constant light,
He turns his course and shorter makes the night[n].

Not far from hence is seen

The Scorpion[o] rising lofty from below;
By him the Archer[p], with his bended bow;
Near him the bird, with gaudy feathers spread[q];
And the fierce Eagle[r] hovers o'er his head.

Next comes the Dolphin[s],

Then bright Orion[t], who obliquely moves;

he is followed by

The fervent Dog[u] bright with refulgent stars:

next the Hare follows[x]

Unwearied in his course. At the Dog's tail
Argo[y] moves on, and moving seems to sail;

[n] When the sun is in Capricorn the days are at the shortest, and when in Cancer at the longest.

[o] One of the six southern signs.

[p] Sagittarius, another southern sign.

[q] The Peacock is said by modern astronomers to have been unknown to the ancients; but I am inclined, from this description, to think otherwise. Bayer, Kepler, and others, make it a southern constellation.

[r] A northern constellation.

[s] A northern constellation.

[t] A southern constellation.

[u] This is Canis Major, a southern constellation. Orion and the Dog are named together by Hesiod, who flourished many hundred years before Cicero or Aratus. See my Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients.

[x] A southern constellation, placed as here in the Atlas Cœlestis.

[y] A southern constellation, so called from the ship Argo, in which Jason and the rest of the Argonauts sailed on their expedition to Colchos.

O'er her the Ram and Fishes have their place[z];
The illustrious vessel touches in her pace,
The River's banks[a];

which you may see winding and extending itself to a great length.

The Fetters[b] at the Fishes' tails are hung.
By Nepa's[c] head behold the Altar stand[d],
Which by the breath of southern winds is fann'd;

near which the Centaur[e]

Hastens his horsy parts to join beneath
The Serpent[f], there extending his right hand
To where you see the monstrous Scorpion stand,
Which he at the bright Altar fiercely slays.
Here on her lower parts see Hydra[g] raise
Herself;

whose bulk is very far extended.

Amidst the winding of her body's placed
The shining Goblet[h]; and the glossy Crow[i]
Plunges his beak into her parts below.

[z] The Ram is the first of the northern signs in the zodiac; and the last southern sign is the Fishes; which two signs, meeting in the zodiac, cover the constellation called Argo.

[a] The river Eridanus, a southern constellation.

[b] A southern constellation.

[c] This is called the Scorpion in the original of Aratus.

[d] A southern constellation.

[e] A southern constellation.

[f] The Serpent is not mentioned in Cicero's translation; but it is in the original of Aratus.

[g] A southern constellation.

[h] The Goblet, or Cup, a southern constellation.

[i] A southern constellation.

Antecanis beneath the Twins is seen,
Call'd Procyon by the Greeks[k].

Can any one in his senses imagine that this disposition of the stars, and this heaven so beautifully adorned, could have been effected by a fortuitous concourse of atoms? or that these things, which could not be produced without reason, nay, which could not have been conceived without great wisdom, could be the work of any nature void of understanding?

But our admiration is not limited to the objects here described. What is most wonderful is, that the world is not to be impaired by time; for all the parts tend equally to the centre, and are bound together by a sort of chain, which surrounds the elements; this chain is nature, which, diffused through the universe, and performing all things with judgment and reason, attracts the extremities to the centre.

If then the world is round, and, consequently, its circumference being the same, all the parts mutually support themselves, it must follow that all the parts incline to the centre (the lowest place of a globe) without anything to put a stop to that great propensity. For the same reason, though the sea is higher than the earth, yet, because it has the like tendency, it equally concentres and never overflows. The air, which is contiguous, ascends by its levity, but diffuses itself through the whole; and, if it be by nature elevated towards the heaven, it is so tempered by a refined heat, that it is made proper for the life and support of

[k] Antecanis, a southern constellation, is the Little Dog, and called Antecanis in Latin, and Προκύων in Greek, because he rises before the other Dog.

animated beings. This is encompassed by the highest region of the heavens, the sky, which is joined to the extremity of the air, but retains its own ardour pure and unmixed.

The stars have their revolutions in the sky, and are continued by the tendency of all parts to the centre; their duration is perpetuated by their form and figure, for they are round; which form, as I think has been before observed, can receive no hurt; and, as they are composed of fire, they are fed by the vapours, which are exhaled by the sun from the earth, the sea, and other waters; but when these vapours have nourished and refreshed the stars, and the whole sky, they are sent back to be exhaled again; so that very little is lost or consumed by the fire of the stars and the flame of the sky.

From hence we Stoics conclude, which Panetius[l] is said to have doubted, that the whole world at last would be in a general conflagration; when, all moisture being exhausted, neither the earth could have any nourishment, nor the air return again, since water, of which it is formed, would then be all consumed; so that only fire would subsist; and from this fire, which is an animating power and a deity, a new world would arise and be reestablished in the same beauty.

I will not dwell much longer upon this subject of the stars; but what I have to say is particularly of the planets, whose motions, though different, make a very just agreement. Saturn the highest, chills; Mars, placed in the middle, burns; while Jupiter, interposing, moderates their excess. The two planets[m] beneath

[l] Panetius, a Stoic philosopher.

[m] Mercury and Venus.

Mars obey the sun. The sun himself fills the whole universe with his own genial light; and the moon, illuminated by him, influences conception, birth, and maturity. None of these reflections, I am certain, have been made by those who have never considered this union, this harmonious concurrence of nature for the preservation of the world.

Let us proceed from celestial to terrestrial things. What is there in them which does not prove an intelligent nature? First, as to vegetables; they have roots to sustain their stems, and to draw from the earth a nourishing moisture[n]. They are clothed with a rind or bark to secure them from heat and cold. The vines we see take hold on props with their tendrils, as if with hands, and raise themselves as if they were animated; it is even said that they shun cabbages and coleworts as noxious and pestilential to them, and if planted by them will not touch any part.

But what a vast variety is there of animals; and how wonderfully is every kind capacitated to preserve itself! Some are covered with hides, some clothed with fleeces, and some guarded with bristles; some are sheltered with feathers, some with scales; some are armed with horns, and some are assisted with wings. Nature has also liberally and plentifully provided their proper food; I could expatiate on the judicious and curious

[n] According to late observations, all vegetables are nourished by the earthy particles which the water conveys through them. If several plants, or flowers, are put separately into glasses or pots of water, they will gradually perish in proportion to the earthy particles in each glass or pot. The plant, or flower, which is put in the water that is most purged of earthy particles, will fade and perish the soonest. These facts are clearly demonstrated by Dr. Woodward in his treatise on this subject, which he founds on frequent experiments.

formation and disposition of their bodies for the reception and digestion of it; for all their interior parts are so framed and disposed that there is nothing superfluous, nothing that is not necessary for the conservation of life. Besides, nature hath given them appetite and sense; that by one they may be excited to procure sufficient sustenance, and by the other they may distinguish the noxious from the salutary. Some animals approach their food walking, some creeping, some flying, and some swimming; some take it with their mouth and teeth; some seize it with their claws, and some with their beaks; some suck, some graze, some devour whole, and some chew it. Some are so low that with ease they feed on the ground, but the taller, as geese, swans, cranes, and camels, are assisted by a length of neck. To the elephant is given a hand[o] without which, from the unwieldiness of body, he would scarce have any means of obtaining food.

But to those beasts which live by preying on others, nature has given either strength or swiftness. On some animals she has even bestowed artifice and cunning; as on spiders, some of which weave a sort of net to entrap whatever comes, others sit on the watch unobserved to fall on their prey and devour it. The naker, by the Greeks called pinna[p], has a kind of confederacy with the prawn for procuring food. It has two large shells open, into which when the little fishes swim, the naker,

[o] The proboscis of the elephant is frequently called a hand, because it is as useful to him as one. They breathe, drink, and smell, with what may not improperly be called a hand, says Pliny, b. 8. c. 10. Davis.

[p] Some write πίνη pina, some πίννη pinna; which is a shell-fish that we call the naker.

having notice given by the bite of the prawn[q], closes them immediately. Thus these little animals, though of different kinds, seek their food in common; in which it is matter of wonder, whether they associate by any agreement, or are naturally joined together from their beginning.

There is some cause of admiration also in those aquatic animals which are generated on land, as crocodiles, river-tortoises, and a certain kind of serpents, which seek the water as soon as they are able to drag themselves along. We frequently put duck eggs under hens, by which, as by their true mothers, the ducklings are at first hatched and nourished; but when they see the water, they forsake them and run to it, as to their natural abode, so strong is the impression of nature in animals for their own preservation.

I have read of a bird called *(platalea)* the shoveler, that lives by watching those fowls which dive into the sea for their prey, and when they return with it he squeezes their heads with his beak till they drop it, and then seizes on it himself; it is said likewise that he will fill his stomach with shell-fish, and when they are concocted by the heat therein, cast them up, and then pick out what is proper nourishment[r].

[q] *Squilla* is a lobster, and *parva squilla* is used for a prawn or shrimp. The *parva squilla* is mentioned by Pliny; but I cannot conceive how naturalists arrived at this knowledge of the naker's manner of getting food by the help of the prawn, since the discovery must be made under water; or let us suppose that they might observe the naker lying on the surface, with one shell under and another above the water, and the little fishes swimming in, yet I am sure they can never discover the prawn giving notice to the naker by a bite, of the entrance of the fishes.

[r] What is here related of the *platalea*, which is usually called the shoveler in English, is, as Dr. Davis observes, told of the pelican; of which Bochart has collected abundance of testimonies.

The sea-frogs, they say, are wont to cover themselves with sand, and, moving near the water, the fishes strike at them as at a bait, and are themselves taken and devoured by the frogs. Between the kite and the crow there is a kind of natural war, that wherever the one finds the eggs of the other he breaks them.

Aristotle, amongst many curious remarks of this kind, has observed one thing worthy of admiration. When the cranes[s] pass the sea in search of warmer climes, they fly in the form of a triangle. By the first angle they repel the resisting air; on each side their wings serve as oars to facilitate their flight; and the basis of their triangle is assisted by the wind in their stern. Those which are behind rest their necks and heads on those which precede, and as the leader has not the same relief, because he has none to lean upon, he at length flies behind that he may also rest, while one of those which have been eased succeeds him; and through the whole flight each regularly takes his turn.

I could produce many instances of this kind, but you see enough in this. Let us now proceed to things more familiar to us. The care of beasts for their own preservation, their circumspection while feeding, and their manner of taking rest, are greatly to be admired. Dogs ease themselves by a vomit[t], the Egyptian ibises

[s] The passage of Aristotle's Works to which Cicero here alludes is entirely lost; but Plutarch gives a similar account of the cranes; and Homer, who wrote many centuries before Aristotle, has a fine simile in his Iliad, taken from the regular flight of the cranes.

[t] Some read *vomitione canis purgare alvos ibes Ægyptiæ curant;* that is, the Egyptian ibises take care to purge themselves with the vomit of a dog; but Dr. Davis and other judicious critics choose *vomitione canes, purgatione autem alvos ibes Ægyptiæ, curant;* in which sense I have translated it; and

by a purge; from whence physicians have lately, I mean but few ages since, greatly improved their art. It is reported that panthers, which in barbarous countries are taken with poisoned flesh, have a certain remedy [u], that preserves them from dying; and that in Crete the wild goats, when they are wounded with poisoned arrows, seek for an herb called dittany, which when they have tasted, the arrows, they say, drop from their bodies. It is said also that deer, before they fawn, purge themselves with a little herb called hartswort [x].

Let us observe next, that beasts, when they receive any hurt, or fear it, have recourse to their natural arms; the bull to his horns, the boar to his tusks, and the lion to his teeth [y]. Some take to flight, others hide themselves; the cuttle-fish vomits blood [z], the cramp-fish benumbs; and there are many animals that by their intolerable stink oblige their pursuers to retire.

But, that the beauty of the world might be eternal, great care has been taken by the providence of the gods to perpetuate the different kinds of animals and vegetables; in order to which, every individual has

it is a common observation that dogs will eat grass and purge themselves by vomiting; and the Egyptian bird, the ibis, is said by several writers to give itself a clyster with its bill.

[u] Balbus does not tell us the remedy which the panther makes use of; but Pliny is not quite so delicate, he says *excrementis hominis sibi medetur.*

[x] Aristotle says they purge themselves with this herb after they fawn; Pliny says both before and after.

[y] The original is *apri dentibus, morsu leones;* they are both armed with the power of biting; and I think *dentibus* and *morsu* have no more difference here than there is between tusks and teeth.

[z] The cuttle-fish has a bag at its neck, the black blood in which the Romans used for ink; it was called *atramentum.*

within itself such fertile seed, that many are generated from one; and in vegetables this seed is enclosed in the heart of their fruit, but in such abundance that men may plentifully feed on it, and the earth be always replanted.

With regard to animals, do we not see with what judgment they were made for the propagation of their species? Nature for this end created some males and some females. Their parts are perfectly framed for generation, and they have a wonderful propensity to copulation. When the seed has fallen on the matrix it draws almost all the nourishment to itself, by which the fœtus is formed; but as soon as it is discharged from thence, if it be an animal that is nourished by milk, almost all the food of the mother turns into milk, and the animal, without any direction but by the pure instinct of nature, immediately hunts for the teat, and is there fed with plenty. What makes it evidently appear that there is nothing in this fortuitous, but the work of a wise and foreseeing nature is, that those females which bring forth many young, as sows and bitches, have many teats, and those which bear a small number have but few.

What tenderness do beasts show in preserving and raising up their young till they are able to defend themselves? They say, indeed, that fish, when they have spawned, leave their eggs; but the water easily supports them, and produces the young fry in abundance. It is said likewise that tortoises and crocodiles, when they have laid their eggs on the land, only cover them with earth, and then leave them, so that their young are hatched and brought up without assistance; but fowls and other birds seek for quiet places to lay

in, where they build their nests in the softest manner, for the surest preservation of their eggs; which, when they have hatched, they defend from the cold by the warmth of their wings, or screen them from the sultry heat of the sun. When their young begin to fly, they attend and instruct them, and then their cares are at an end. Human art and industry are indeed necessary towards the preservation and improvement of certain animals and vegetables, for there are several of both kinds which would perish without that assistance.

Mankind likewise receives great advantages from different soils. The Nile waters Egypt, and after having overflowed and covered it the whole summer, it retires and leaves the fields softened and manured for the reception of seed. The Euphrates fertilizes Mesopotamia, into which, as we may say, it carries yearly new fields[a]. The Indus, which is the largest[b] of all rivers, not only improves and cultivates the ground, but sows it also; for it is said to carry with it a great quantity of grain. I could mention many other countries remarkable for something singular, and many fields which are, in their own natures, exceedingly fertile.

But how bountiful is nature that has provided for us such various and delicious food; and this in different seasons, that we may be constantly pleased with change and with plenty! How seasonable and useful to man, to beasts, and even to vegetables, are the

[a] The Euphrates is said to carry into Mesopotamia a large quantity of citrons, with which it covers the fields.

[b] Q. Curtius and some other authors say the Ganges is the largest river in India; but Ammianus Marcellinus concurs with Tully in calling the river Indus the largest of all rivers.

eastern winds[e] she has bestowed, which moderate intemperate heat, and render navigation more sure and speedy!

Many things must be omitted on a subject so copious; for it is impossible to relate the great utility of rivers, the flux and reflux of the sea, the mountains clothed with grass and trees, the salt-pits remote from the seacoasts, the earth replete with salutary medicines, or, in short, the innumerable designs of nature necessary for sustenance and the enjoyment of life. We must not forget the vicissitude of day and night, ordained for the health of animated beings, giving them a time to labour and a time to rest.

Thus, if we every way examine the universe, it is apparent, from the greatest reason, that the whole is admirably governed by a divine providence for the safety and preservation of all beings.

If it should be asked for whose sake this mighty fabric was raised, shall we say for trees and other vegetables, which, though destitute of sense, are supported by nature? That would be absurd. Is it for beasts? Nothing can be less probable than that the gods should have taken such pains for beings void of speech and understanding. For whom then? Undoubtedly for reasonable beings; these are the gods and men, who are certainly the most perfect of all beings, as nothing is equal to reason; it is therefore credible that the universe and all things in it were made for the gods and for men.

But we may yet more easily comprehend that the

[e] Those eastern winds are anniversary, and blow at certain seasons and for a certain time.

world was given by the gods to men, if we examine thoroughly into the structure of the body and the form and perfection of human nature[d].

There are three things absolutely necessary for the support of life; to eat, to drink, and to breathe; for these operations the mouth is most aptly framed, which by the assistance of the nostrils draws in the more air. The teeth are there placed to divide and grind[e] the food. The fore-teeth, being sharp and opposite to each other, cut it asunder, and the hind-teeth (called the grinders) chew it; in which office the tongue seems to assist. At the root of the tongue is the gullet, which receives whatever is swallowed; it touches the tonsils[f] on each side, and terminates at the interior extremity of the palate. When by the motions of the tongue the food is forced into this passage, it descends, and those parts of the gullet which are below it are dilated, and those above are contracted. There is another passage, called by physicians the rough artery[g], which reaches to the lungs for the entrance and return of the air we breathe; and, as its orifice is joined to the roots of the tongue a little above the part to which the gullet is annexed, it is furnished with a sort of coverlid[h], lest

[d] If we strictly examine the structure of the human body as here anatomically described, we may reasonably conclude that it could not be the effect of matter and motion only.

[e] Some read *mollitur* and some *molitur*; the latter of which P. Manucius justly prefers, from the verb *molo, molis*; from whence, says he, *molares dentes*, the grinders. Most men have just thirty-two teeth; four fore-teeth, two dog-teeth, and ten grinders in each jaw.

[f] We call them almonds; which are two glandules, by the roots of the tongue, opposite each other.

[g] The weasand, or windpipe.

[h] The epiglottis, which is a cartilaginous flap in the shape of a tongue, and therefore called so; its office is very wonderful, in shutting down when

by the accidental falling of any food into it the respiration should be stopped.

As the stomach, which is beneath the gullet, receives the meat and drink, so the lungs and the heart draw in the air from without. The stomach is wonderfully composed, consisting almost wholly of nerves; it abounds with membranes and fibres, and detains what it receives, whether solid or liquid, till it is altered and digested. It sometimes contracts, sometimes dilates. It blends and mixes the food together, so that it is easily concocted and digested by its force of heat, and by the animal spirits is distributed into the other parts of the body. As to the lungs, they are of a soft and spungy substance, which renders them the most commodious for respiration; they alternately dilate and contract to receive and return the air, that what is the chief animal sustenance may be always fresh.

The juice[i], by which we are nourished, being separated from the rest of the food, passes the stomach and intestines to the liver, through open and direct passages, which lead from the mysentery to the ports of the liver (for so they call those vessels at the entrance of it). There are other passages from thence, through which the food has its course, when it has passed the liver. When the choler[k] and those hu-

we swallow, lest what we eat should go down that passage and obstruct the breath.

[i] Cicero is here giving the opinion of the ancients concerning the passage of the chyle till it is converted to blood. By the intestines he means the guts and ventricle. Our food, after concoction in the stomach, falls into the intestines, where the finest part turns to chyle.

[k] In all concoctions there is choler, which is a fiery excrement, and no art can be more regular than this chymical progress of the food; part of which proceeds to chyle and blood, in the anatomical system of man.

mours, which proceed from the reins, are separated from the food, the remaining part turns to blood and flows to those vessels at the entrance of the liver, to which all the passages adjoin. The chyle, being conveyed from this place through them into the vessel called the hollow vein[l], is mixed together, and, being already digested and distilled, passes into the heart; and from the heart it is communicated through a great number of veins to every part of the body[m]. It is not difficult to describe how the gross remains are detruded by the motion of the intestines, which contract and dilate; but that must be declined, as too indelicate for discourse.

Let us rather explain that other wonder of nature. The air, which is drawn into the lungs, receives heat both by that already in, and by the coagitation of the lungs; one part is turned back by respiration, and the other is received into a place called the ventricle of the heart[n]. There is another ventricle like it annexed to the heart, into which the blood flows from the liver through the hollow vein; thus by one ventricle the blood is diffused to the extremities through the veins, and by the other the breath is communicated through the arteries; and there are such numbers of both dispersed through the whole body that they manifest a divine art.

[l] I here refer the reader to my Inquiry into the Astronomy and Anatomy of the Ancients at the end of this work; where he will see what are the offices of the arteries, veins, and nerves.

[m] The arteries, veins, and nerves are spread through the body like the branches of a tree; and every ramification has its office: but of this more may be seen in my Inquiry, etc.

[n] What Tully here calls the two ventricles of the heart are likewise called auricles, of which there is the right and left.

Shall I speak of the bones, those supports of the body, whose joints are so wonderfully contrived for stability, and to render the limbs complete with regard to motion and to every action of the body? Shall I mention the nerves, by which the limbs are governed, their many interweavings and their proceeding from the heart[o], from whence, like the veins and arteries, they have their origin, and are distributed through the whole corporeal frame?

To this skill of nature and this care of providence many reflections may be added, which show what valuable things the deity has bestowed on man. He has made us of a stature tall and upright[p], that beholding the heavens we might arrive to the knowledge of the gods; for we are not simply to dwell here as inhabitants of the earth, but to contemplate the heavens and the stars; a privilege not granted to any other kind of animated beings.

The senses, which are the interpreters and messengers[q] of things, are placed in the head as in a tower, and wonderfully situated for their proper uses; for the eyes, being in the highest part, have the office of sentinels, in discovering to us the objects; and the ears are conveniently placed in an eminent part, being appointed

[o] The Stoics and Peripatetics said, that the nerves, veins, and arteries came directly from the heart. According to the anatomy of the moderns, they come from the brain. See my Inquiry, etc.

[p] Xenophon has used the same argument to show the wisdom of the deity in the constitution of man, as he has other arguments similar to what are used by the Stoic, soon after in his examination into the senses.

[q] The senses are here called *interpretes ac nuntii rerum*, the interpreters and messengers of things; that is, they are the messengers which carry and distinguish objects to the mind, without which no idea could have place in the mind, as Mr. Locke has abundantly demonstrated in his first two books Concerning Human Understanding.

to receive sound, which naturally ascends. The nostrils have the like situation, because all scent likewise ascends; and have, with great reason, a near vicinity to the mouth; because they assist us in judging of meat and drink. The taste, which is to distinguish the quality of what we take, is in that part of the mouth where nature has laid open a passage for what we eat and drink[r]; but the touch is equally diffused through the whole body, that we may not receive any blows, or the too rigid attacks of cold and heat, without feeling them; and as in building the architect averts from the eyes and nose of the master those things which must necessarily be offensive, so has nature removed far from our senses what is of the same kind in the human body[s].

What artificer but nature, whose direction is incomparable, could so artfully have formed the senses? She has covered and invested the eyes with the finest membranes, which she has made transparent that we see through them, and firm in their texture to preserve the eyes. She has made them slippery and moveable, that they might avoid what would offend them, and easily direct the sight wherever they will. The point of sight, which is called the pupil, is so small

[r] The taste is the office of the palate towards the throat.

[s] The Stoic here bestows unnecessary praises on his architect, nature; for if we examine into the easy communication of sound and scents to the ears and nostrils, we shall find those two senses as susceptible of offensive sounds and smells as of such as are pleasing; nor are they so placed as to refuse the bad any more than the good, but are placed upwards the more easily to admit sounds and smells, because they ascend, as Balbus said but a little before; he therefore contradicts himself too soon not to have it observed; the eyes indeed are naturally placed more out of the reach of offensive objects than the nostrils or ears.

that it can easily shun whatever may be hurtful to it. The eyelids, which are their coverings, are soft and smooth that they may not injure the eyes, and are made to shut at the apprehension of any accident, or to open at pleasure, and these movements nature has ordained to be made in an instant; they are fortified with a sort of palisade of hairs to keep off what may be noxious to them when open, and to be a fence to their repose, when sleep closes them and renders them useless. Besides, they are commodiously hidden and defended by eminences on every side; for on the upper part the eyebrows turn aside the sweat which falls from the head and forehead; the cheeks beneath, having a little rising, protect the lower; and the nose is placed between them as a wall of separation.

The hearing is always open; for that is a sense we need even while we are sleeping. If any sound enter, we awake. It has a winding passage, lest anything should slip into it, as it might if it were straight and even. Nature has also taken the same precaution in making there a viscous humour, that if any little creatures should endeavour to creep in they might stick in it as in bird-lime. The ears (by which we mean the outward part) are made prominent, to cover and preserve the hearing, lest the sound should dissipate and escape before the sense is affected. Their entrances are hard and horny, and their form winding, because bodies of this kind better return and increase the sound. This appears in the harp, lute, or horn[t]; and from all tortuous and enclosed places sounds are returned stronger.

[t] Our author means all musical instruments, whether stringed or wind instruments, which are hollow and tortuous.

The nostrils in like manner are ever open, because we have a continual use for them. Their entrances are narrower, lest anything noxious should enter them, and they have always an humidity necessary for the repelling dust and other extraneous bodies.

The taste, having the mouth as an enclosure, is admirably situated both in regard to the use we make of it and to its security.

Besides, every human sense is much more exquisite[u] than those of brutes; for our eyes, in those arts which come under their judgment, distinguish more nicely; as in painting, sculpture, and in the gesture and motion of bodies. They understand the beauty, proportion, and, as I may so term it, the decency of colours and figures; they distinguish things of greater importance, even virtues and vices; they know whether a man is angry or calm, cheerful or sad, courageous or cowardly, bold or timorous. The judgment of the ear is not less wonderful with regard to vocal and instrumental music. They distinguish the variety of sounds, the measure, the stops, the different sorts of voices, the treble and the bass, the soft and the harsh, the sharp and the flat, of which human ears only are capable of judging. There is likewise great judgment in the smell, the taste, and the touch; to indulge and gratify which senses more arts have been invented than I could wish: it is apparent to what excess we are arrived in the composition of our perfumes, the preparation of our food, and the enjoyment of corporeal pleasures.

Again, he who does not perceive the soul and mind

[u] I question the truth of this. We have reason to believe that dogs have a more sagacious smell than men.

of man, his reason, prudence, and discernment to be the work of a divine providence, seems himself to be destitute of those faculties. While I am on this subject, Cotta, I wish I had your eloquence; how would you illustrate so fine a subject! You would show the great extent of the understanding; how we collect our ideas, and join those which follow to those which precede; establish principles, draw consequences, define things separately, and comprehend them together; from whence you would demonstrate that we are arrived to a true knowledge, which is the fulness of perfection even in the deity.

How valuable (though you Academics despise and even deny we have it) is our knowledge of exterior objects[x], from the perception of the senses, joined to the application of the mind; by which we see in what relation one thing stands to another, and from thence have invented those arts which are necessary for the support and pleasure of life.

How charming is eloquence! how divine that mistress of the universe, as you call it! It learns us what we were ignorant of, and makes us capable of teaching what we have learned. By this we admonish; by this we persuade; by this we comfort the afflicted; by this we deliver the affrighted from their fear; by this we moderate excessive mirth; by this we assuage the passions of lust and anger. It is this which has imposed laws, formed the bonds of civil society, and has made us quit a wild and savage life.

[x] The Stoic here explodes that doctrine of the Academics, which denies our seeing anything without us, but makes all to be internal; a whimsical doctrine, strongly asserted by Malbranche, and the favourite hypothesis of the ingenious author of the Minute Philosopher!

Nor will you yet believe, unless you carefully observe, how complete the work of nature is in giving us the use of speech; for, first, there is an artery from the lungs to the bottom of the mouth, through which the voice, having its original principle in the mind, is transmitted. Then the tongue is placed in the mouth, bounded by the teeth. It softens and modulates the voice, which would otherwise be confusedly uttered; and, by pushing it to the teeth and other parts of the mouth, makes the sound distinct and articulate. We Stoics therefore compare the tongue to the bow of an instrument[y], the teeth to the strings, and the nostrils to the body of it.

But how commodious are the hands which nature has given to man, and how ministerial to many arts! for such is the flexibility of the joints, that our fingers are closed and opened without any difficulty. With their help the hand is formed for painting, carving, and engraving; for playing on stringed instruments and on the pipe. These are matters of pleasure; those of necessity are tilling the ground, building houses, making cloth and habits, and working in brass and iron. It is the part of the mind to invent, the senses to perceive, and the hand to execute; so that if we have buildings, if we are clothed, if we live in safety, if we have cities, walls, habitations, and temples, it is to the hands we owe them.

By our labour, that is, by our hands, variety and plenty of food are provided; for without culture many fruits, which serve either for present or future con-

[y] This simile has been used by various authors. The instrument to which the tongue, teeth, and nostrils are here resembled is the dulcimer.

sumption, would not be produced; besides, we feed on flesh, fish, and fowl, catching some, and bringing up others. We subdue four-footed beasts for our carriage, whose speed and strength supply our slowness and inability. On some we put burthens, on others yokes. We convert the sagacity of the elephant and the quick scent of the dog to our own advantage. Out of the caverns of the earth we dig iron, with which we till the ground. We discover the hidden veins of copper, silver, and gold, and apply them to our use and ornament. We fell both planted and forest trees and timber, as well to make fire to warm us and dress our meat, as to erect coverings to defend us from heat and cold. With timber likewise we build ships, which bring us from all parts every commodity of life. We are the only animals who, from our knowledge of navigation, can manage, what nature has made the most violent, the sea and the winds. Thus we obtain from the ocean great numbers of profitable things. We are absolutely the masters of what the earth produces. We enjoy the mountains and the plains. The rivers and the lakes are ours. We sow the seed, and plant the trees. We fertilize the earth by overflowing it. We stop, direct, and turn the rivers; in short, our hands endeavour, in the nature of things[z], to make, as we may say, another nature.

But what shall I say of human reason? Has it not even entered the heavens? Man alone of all animals has observed the courses of the stars, their risings and settings. By man, the day, the month, the year is

[z] By the nature of things here our author means the world, which is the province of nature, in which she operates.

determined. He foresees the eclipses of the sun and moon, and foretells them to futurity, marking their greatness, duration, and precise time. From the contemplation of these things the mind extracts the knowledge of the gods; a knowledge which produces piety, justice, and the other virtues; from which arises a life of felicity, equal and like to that of the gods, except in immortality, which is not absolutely necessary to happy living.

In explaining these things, I think I have sufficiently demonstrated the superiority of man to other animated beings; from whence we should infer, that neither the form and position of his limbs, nor that strength of mind and understanding, could possibly be the effect of chance. I am now to prove, by way of conclusion, that everything in this world, of use to us, was made designedly for us.

62 First, the universe was made for the gods and men, and all things therein were prepared and provided for our service. It is the common habitation or city of the gods and men; for they are the only reasonable beings; they alone live by justice and law. As therefore it must be presumed the cities of Athens and Lacedæmon were built for the Athenians and Lacedæmonians, and as everything there is said to belong to those people, so everything in the universe may be thought to be for the gods and men.

Though the revolutions of the sun, moon, and all the stars, are necessary for the cohesion of the universe, yet are they also the objects of man's view. There is no sight less apt to satiate the eye, none more beautiful or more worthy to employ our reason and penetration. By measuring their courses we find the

different seasons, their durations and vicissitudes, which, if known only to men, we must believe were made only for their sake.

Does the earth bring forth fruit and grain, in such abundance and variety, for men or for brutes? The plentiful and exhilarating fruit of the vine and the olive tree are entirely useless to beasts. They know not the time for sowing, tilling, or for harvest, nor of laying up and preserving their stores; man alone has the care and advantage of these things. Thus, as the lute and the pipe were made for those who are capable of playing on them, so it must be allowed the produce of the earth was designed for those only who make use of them; and though some beasts may rob us of a small part, it does not follow that the earth produced it also for them. Men do not store up corn for mice and ants, but for their wives, their children, and all their families; beasts therefore, as I said before, possess it by stealth, but their masters openly and freely; it is for us then that nature has provided this great abundance.

Can there be any doubt that this plenty and variety of fruit, which delight not only the taste, but the smell and sight, was by nature intended for men only? Beasts are so far from being partakers of this design, that we see even themselves were made for man; for of what utility would sheep be, unless for their wool[a], which, when dressed and wove, serves us for clothing; for they are not capable of anything, not even of procuring their own food, without the care and assistance

[a] We may suppose from this passage that mutton was in no repute, since sheep are here said to be good for nothing but their wool.

of man. The fidelity of the dog, his affectionate fawning on his master, his aversion to strangers, his sagacity in finding game, and his vivacity in pursuit of it, what do these qualities denote but that he was created for our use? Shall I mention oxen? We perceive their backs were not formed for carrying burthens, but their necks were naturally made for the yoke, and their strong broad shoulders to draw the plough. In the golden age, which poets speak of, they were so greatly beneficial to the husbandman in tilling the fallow ground, that no violence was ever offered them, and it was even thought a crime to eat them;

> The iron age began the fatal trade
> Of blood, and hammer'd the destructive blade;
> Then men began to make the ox to bleed,
> And on the tamed and docile beast to feed[b].

I should be too tedious to relate the advantages we receive from mules and asses, which undoubtedly were designed for our use. What is the swine good for but to eat? whose life, Chrysippus says, was given it but as salt to keep it from putrefying[c]; and as it is proper food for man, nature has made no animal more fruitful. What a multitude of birds and fishes, which are taken by the art and contrivance of man only, and which are so delicious to our taste that one would be tempted sometimes to believe that our providence was an Epicurean. Though we think there

[b] The Latin version of Tully is a translation from the Greek of Aratus.

[c] Chrysippus's meaning is, that the swine is so inactive and slothful a beast, that life seems to be of no use to it but to keep it from putrefaction, as salt keeps dead flesh. This conceit of Chrysippus may be justly ranked under some species of wit.

are some birds, the *alites* and *oscines*[d], as our augurs call them, which were made merely to foretell events. The large savage beasts we take by hunting, either for food, to exercise ourselves in imitation of martial discipline, to use those we can tame and instruct, as elephants[e], or to extract remedies for our diseases and wounds, as we do from certain roots and herbs, the virtues of which are known by long use and experience.

Represent to yourself the whole earth and seas as if before your eyes; you will see the vast and fertile plains, the thick shady mountains, the immense pasturage for cattle, and ships sailing over the deep with incredible celerity; nor are our discoveries only on the face of the earth; but in its secret recesses there are many useful things, which, being made for man, by man alone can be discovered.

Another, and in my opinion the strongest, proof, that the providence of the gods takes care of us, is divination; which both of you perhaps will attack; you, Cotta, because Carneades took pleasure in inveighing against the Stoics; and you, Velleius, because there is nothing Epicurus ridicules so much as the prediction of events; yet the truth of divination appears in many places, on many occasions, often in private, but particularly in public concerns. We receive many intimations from the foresight and presages of augurs and aruspices; from oracles, prophecies,

[d] Ales, in the general signification, is any large bird; and *oscinis* is any singing bird. But they here mean those birds which are used in augury; *alites* are the birds whose flight was observed by the augurs, and *oscines* the birds from whose voices they augured.

[e] The elephant is mentioned here for the use it was of in war, and for its superior understanding to other brutes.

dreams, and prodigies; and it often happens that by these means events have proved happy to men, and imminent dangers have been avoided[f]. This knowledge, therefore, call it either a kind of transport or an art, or a natural faculty, is certainly found only in men, and is a gift only from the immortal gods.

If these proofs, when taken separately, should make no impression upon your mind, yet when collected together they must certainly affect you.

Besides, the gods not only provide for mankind universally, but for particular men. You may bring this universality to a less number, and that less number to particulars. For if the reasons I have given prove that the gods take care of all men, in every country, in every part of the world separate from our continent, they take care of those who dwell on the same land with us, from east to west; and if they regard those who inhabit this kind of great island, which we call the globe of the earth, they have the like regard for those who possess the parts of this island, Europe, Asia, and Africa; and therefore they favour the parts of these parts, as Rome, Athens, Sparta, and Rhodes; and particular men of these cities, separate from the

[f] These, and some which follow, are strange arguments for the proof of a deity, and that man is his peculiar care. The Epicureans justly exploded these superstitions of the Stoic. Nature is constant in her operations, and God cannot favour one man without injustice to another; for favour implies partiality; where there is favour there is attachment; God has none but to what is right. Weak men often call that favour which is only justice, and frequently impute to divine providence the regular operations of nature. If particular instances of God's regard to chosen men are proofs of his divine providence, and care of human kind, what are the sufferings of other persons, equally good, proofs of? The answer is obvious enough to men of common sense, and fools are incapable of confutation. God loves no men arbitrarily because he loves them.

whole; as Curius, Fabricius, Coruncanius, in the war with Pyrrhus; in the first Punic war, Calatinus, Duillius, Metellus, Lutatius; in the second, Maximus, Marcellus, Africanus; after these, Paullus, Gracchus, Cato; and in our fathers' times, Scipio, Lælius; Rome also and Greece have produced many illustrious men, whom we cannot believe were so without the assistance of the deity; which is the reason that the poets, Homer in particular, joined their chief heroes, Ulysses, Agamemnon, Diomedes, Achilles, to certain deities, as companions in their adventures and dangers. Besides, the frequent appearances of the gods, as I have before mentioned, demonstrate their regard for cities and particular men; this is also apparent indeed from the foreknowledge of events, which we receive either sleeping or waking. We are likewise forewarned of many things by the entrails of victims, by presages and many other means, which have been long observed with such exactness, as to produce an art of divination. There never therefore was a great man without divine inspiration. If a storm should damage the corn or vineyard of a person, or any accident should deprive him of some conveniencies of life, we should not judge from thence that the deity hates or neglects him. The gods take care of great things and disregard the small. To truly great men all things ever happen prosperously[s]; as has been sufficiently treated of by us Stoics as well as by Socrates, the prince of philosophers, in his discourses on the infinite advantages arising from virtue.

This is almost the whole that has occurred to my

[s] This assertion is contradicted by almost every day's experience.

mind on the nature of the gods, and what I thought proper to advance. Do you, Cotta, if I may advise, defend the same cause. Remember that in Rome you keep the first rank; remember you are pontifex; and as your sect is at liberty to dispute on which side you please[h], do you rather take mine, and reason on it with that eloquence which you acquired by your rhetorical exercises, and which the Academy improved; for it is a pernicious and impious custom either seriously or seemingly to argue against the gods.

[h] As the Academics doubted everything, it was indifferent to them which side of a question they took. Balbus advises Cotta to take his side of the question, and reminds him, in a polite manner, of the dignity of his character, as a caution to him to treat the subject with all due respect.

OF THE

NATURE OF THE GODS.

BOOK III.

WHEN Balbus had ended his discourse, says Cotta, with a smile, you direct me too late which side to defend; for through the course of your argument I was thinking what objections to make, not so much for the sake of opposition, as of obliging you to explain what I did not perfectly comprehend; and as every one may use his own judgment, it is scarce possible to make your ideas the rule of mine. How great, says Velleius, is my impatience to hear. Since our friend Balbus was highly delighted with your discourse against Epicurus, I ought in my turn to be solicitous to hear what you can say against the Stoics; for I believe you are, as usual, well prepared for the engagement. I wish, by Hercules, I was, replies Cotta; for it is more difficult to dispute with Balbus than it was with you. Why so, says Velleius. Because, replies Cotta, your Epicurus, in my opinion, does not contend strongly for the gods; he only, to avoid any censure or punishment, is afraid to deny their existence; for when he asserts that the gods are wholly inactive and regardless of everything, that they have limbs like ours, but make no use of them, he seems to jest with us, and to think it sufficient if he allows that there are beings happy and eternal. But

with regard to Balbus, I suppose you observed how many things were said by him, which, however false they may be, yet have a perfect coherence and connection; therefore my design, as I said, in opposing him, is not so much to confute his principles as to induce him to explain what I do not clearly understand: for which reason, Balbus, I will give you the choice, either to answer me every particular as I go on, or permit me to proceed without interruption. If you want any explanation, replies Balbus, I had rather you would propose your doubts singly; but if your intention be rather to confute me than for your own instruction, it shall be as you please; I will either answer you immediately to every point, or stay till you have finished your discourse. Very well, says Cotta, then let us proceed as our conversation shall direct.

But before I enter on the subject, I have a word to say concerning myself; for I am greatly influenced by your authority, and your exhortation, at the conclusion of your discourse, to remember I was Cotta and pontifex; by which, I presume, you intimated that I should defend the religion and ceremonies which we received from our ancestors: truly I always have and always shall defend them, nor shall the arguments either of the learned or unlearned ever remove the opinions I have imbibed from them concerning the worship of the immortal gods. In matters of religion I submit to the rules of the high priests T. Coruncanius, P. Scipio, and P. Scævola; not to the sentiments of Zeno, Cleanthes, or Chrysippus; and I pay a greater regard to what C. Lælius, one of our augurs and wise men, has written concerning religion, than to the most eminent of the Stoics; and as the religion of the

Romans at first consisted in sacrifices and divination by birds, to which have since been added predictions, if the interpreters [a] of the sibylline oracle or the aruspices have foretold any event from portents and prodigies, I ever thought these articles should not be despised; I have been even persuaded that Romulus, by instituting divination, and Numa, by establishing sacrifices, laid the foundation of Rome, which undoubtedly would never have risen to such a height of grandeur, if the gods had not been made propitious by this worship.

These, Balbus, are my sentiments, both as a priest and as Cotta. But you must bring me to your opinion by the force of your reason; for a philosopher should prove to me the religion he would have me embrace; but I must believe the religion of our ancestors without any proof [b].

What proof, says Balbus, do you require of me?

You have proposed, says Cotta, four articles. First, that there are gods. Secondly, what they are. Thirdly, that the universe is governed by them. Lastly, that they regard mankind in particular. Thus, if I remember rightly, you divided your discourse.

[a] The keepers and interpreters of the sibylline oracles were the *quindecemviri*.

[b] I believe I may venture to assert that this is the only reason that most people can give for being tenacious of the religion in which they were educated. Le Bruyn gives us this account of the religion of the Tartars of Siberia; it consists in making an offering once a year; for which purpose they assemble in the woods and kill a beast of each kind, though their offerings are chiefly horses and a sort of goats. Having flayed them, they hang them on a tree and then fall down before them, and afterwards eat the flesh and return home. If they are asked a reason for this their worship, they say they had it from their forefathers, and that is sufficient for them.

Exactly so, replies Balbus; but let us see what you require.

Let us examine, says Cotta, every proposition. The first, that there are gods, cannot be contested but by the most impious; nay, though it can never be rooted out of my mind, yet I believe it on the authority of our ancestors, and not on the proofs you have brought. Why do you expect a proof from me, says Balbus, if you believe it? Because, says Cotta, I come to this disputation as if I had never thought of the gods or heard anything concerning them. Take me as a disciple wholly ignorant, and answer to my questions. Begin then, replies Balbus. I would first know, says Cotta, why you have been so long in proving the existence of the gods, which you said was a point so very evident to all, that there was no need of any proof? In that, answers Balbus, I have followed your example, whom I have often observed, when pleading in the Forum, to load the judge with all the arguments which the nature of your cause would permit. This also is the practice of philosophers, and I have a right to follow it. Besides, you may as well ask me why I look upon you with two eyes, since I can see you with one. You shall judge then yourself, says Cotta, if this be a very just comparison; for when I plead I do not dwell upon any point agreed to be self-evident, because long reasoning only serves to confound the clearest matters; besides, though I might take this method in pleading, yet I should not make use of it in such a discourse as this, which requires the nicest distinction; and with regard to your making use of one eye only when you look on me, there is no reason for it, since together they have the same view; and since nature, to which

you attribute wisdom, has been pleased to give us two passages by which we receive light. But because you did not think that the existence of the gods was so evident as you could wish, you therefore brought so many proofs. It was sufficient for me to believe it on the tradition of our ancestors; and since you disregard authorities, and appeal to reason, permit my reason to defend them against yours. The proofs on which you found the existence of the gods, tend only to render a proposition doubtful, that, in my opinion, is not so; I have not only retained in my memory the whole of these proofs, but even the order in which you proposed them.

The first was[c], that when we lift up our eyes towards the heavens we immediately conceive there is some divinity that governs those celestial bodies; on which you quoted this passage,

> Look up to the refulgent heav'n above,
> Which all men call, unanimously, Jove[d].

intimating that we should invoke that as Jupiter, rather than our Capitoline Jove[e], or that it is evident to the whole world that those bodies are gods, which Velleius and many others do not place in the rank even of animated beings.

Another strong proof, in your opinion, was, that the belief of the existence of the gods was universal, and mankind was daily more convinced of it. What! should an affair of such importance be left to the deci-

[c] See book ii. p. 69. [d] Ibid.

[e] The popular name of Jupiter in Rome, being looked upon as defender of the capitol (in which he was placed) and stayer of the state.

sion of fools[f], who, by your sect especially, are called madmen?

But the gods[g] have appeared to us; as to Posthumius at the lake Regillus, and to Vatienus in the Salarian Way; something you mentioned too, I know not what, of a battle of the Locrians at Sagra. Do you believe that the Tyndaridæ[h], as you called them, that is, men sprung from men, and were buried in Lacedæmon, as we learn from Homer[i], who lived in the next age, do you believe, I say, that they appeared to Vatienus on the road mounted on white horses, without any servant to attend them, to tell the victory of the Romans to a country fellow rather than to M. Cato, who was at that time the chief person of the senate? Do you take that print of a horse's hoof, which is now to be seen on a stone at Regillus, to be made by Castor's horse? Should you not believe, what is probable, that the souls of eminent men, such as the Tyndaridæ, are divine and immortal, rather than that those bodies, which had been reduced to ashes, should mount on horses and fight in an army? If you say that was pos-

[f] Cotta means the multitude, the common run of people, the great vulgar and the small, which he says are by the Stoics called fools, and those fools madmen. Fools and madmen have been, and still are, thought synonymous by many. They both indeed think and act repugnant to reason; and so far they are alike: but the most material difference between them is this, the errors of madmen (what we commonly call madmen) arise from mistaking themselves; the errors of (what we commonly call) fools, from mistaking things. Nothing surely can be more absurd than appealing to popular opinion for the truth of a religion. If popularity were to decide, the Christian religion must yield to the Mohammedan.

[g] See p. 70.

[h] Castor and Pollux; called Tyndaridæ from Tyndarus. Castor is said to be the son of Jupiter by Leda. Pollux and Helen are said to be the children of Tyndarus by Leda.

[i] In his Iliad.

sible, you ought to show how it is so, and not amuse us with fabulous stories.

Do you take these for fabulous stories? says Balbus. Is not the temple, built by Posthumius in honour of Castor and Pollux, to be seen in the Forum? Is not the decree of the senate concerning Vatienus[k] still subsisting? As to the affair of Sagra, it is a common proverb among the Greeks[l]; when they would affirm any thing strongly, they say, "it is as certain as what passed at Sagra." Ought not such authorities to move you? You oppose me, replies Cotta, with stories, but I ask reasons of you.

[Some passages of the original are here wanting. Cotta continues speaking against the doctrine of the Stoics.]

3 We are now to speak of predictions. No one can avoid what is to come, and indeed it is commonly useless to know it; for it is a miserable case to be afflicted to no purpose, and not to have even the last, the common comfort, hope, which according to your principles none can have; for you say that fate governs all things, and call that fate which has been true from all eternity. What satisfaction therefore, or what caution, can it be to us to know anything that is to come, since it will come inevitably?

But whence comes that divination? To whom is owing that knowledge from the entrails of beasts? Who first made observations from the voice of the crow?

[k] That is as much as to say, is not such a story, or such a religion, made true by act of parliament?

[l] As we say, when we earnestly assert the truth of anything, "It is as true as the Gospel."

Who invented the lots[m]? Not that I give no credit to these things, or that I despise Attius Navius's staff, which you mentioned; but I ought to be informed how these things are understood by philosophers, especially as the diviners are often wrong in their conjectures.

But physicians, you say, are likewise often mistaken. What comparison can there be between divination, of the principles of which we are ignorant, and physic, which is a known art?

You believe that the Decii[n], in devoting themselves to death, appeased the gods. How great then was the iniquity of the gods, that they could not be appeased but at the price of such noble blood; that was a stratagem; but a stratagem worthy such illustrious leaders, who consulted the public good even at the expense of their own lives; they conceived rightly, what indeed happened, that if the general rode furiously upon the enemy, the whole army would follow his example.

As to the voice of the Fauns, I never heard it; if you assure me you have, I shall believe you; though I am absolutely ignorant what a Faun is.

Truly, Balbus, you have not yet proved the existence of the gods; I believe it, indeed, but not from any arguments of the Stoics.

Cleanthes, you said, attributes the idea that men have of the gods to four causes. The first is (what I

[m] The word *sortes* is often used for the answers of the oracles, or rather for the rolls in which the answers were written.

[n] Three of this eminent family sacrificed themselves for their country; the father in the Latin war, the son in the Tuscan war, and the grandson, in the war with Pyrrhus.

have sufficiently mentioned) to a foreknowledge of future events; the second, to tempests and other shocks of nature; the third, to the utility and plenty of things we enjoy; the fourth, to the invariable order of the stars and the heavens. Foreknowledge I have already answered. With regard to tempests in the air, the sea, and the earth, I own that many people are affrighted by them, and imagine that the immortal gods are the authors of them. But the question is not whether there are people who believe there are gods, but whether there are gods or not? As to the two other causes of Cleanthes, one of which is derived from the plenty we enjoy, the other from the invariable order of the seasons and the heavens, I shall treat on them when I answer your discourse concerning the providence of the gods; a point, Balbus, upon which you have spoken largely. I shall likewise defer till then your argument of Chrysippus, that if there is in nature anything which surpasses the power of man, there must consequently be some being better than man; as also your comparison of the world to a fine house, your observations on the proportion and harmony of the universe, and your smart short reasons of Zeno; I shall examine at the same time your physics concerning that vital heat, which you regard as the principle of all things; and what you advanced the other day on the existence of the gods, and on the sense and understanding which you gave to the sun, the moon, and all the stars; and I shall often ask you this question; by what proofs are you convinced there are gods?

I thought, says Balbus, it had been proved; but such is your manner of opposing, that, when you seem to interrogate me, and I am preparing to answer, you

suddenly divert the discourse, and give me no opportunity for it; thus are those most important points concerning divination and fate neglected; which we Stoics have thoroughly examined, and you have only slightly touched upon. But they are not thought essential to the question in hand; therefore, if you think proper, do not blend them together, that we may end clearly this our present dispute. Very well, says Cotta; since you have divided the whole question into four parts, and I have spoken what I had to say on the first, I will take the second into consideration; in which, when you attempted to show what the gods are, you seemed to me to show there are none; for you said that it was the greatest difficulty to draw our minds from the prepossessions of the eyes; that as nothing is more excellent than the deity, you did not doubt that the world was god, because there is nothing better in nature than the world, so we may reasonably think it animated, or rather perceive it in our minds as clearly as if it was obvious to our eyes.

Now, in what sense do you say there is nothing better than the world? If you mean beautiful, I agree with you. If that there is nothing more adapted to our wants, I likewise agree with you; but if you mean that nothing is wiser than the world, I am by no means of your opinion. Not that I find it difficult to conceive anything in my mind, independent of my eyes; on the contrary, the more I conceive in my mind only, the less I am able to comprehend your opinion.

Nothing is better than the world, you say. Nor is there, indeed, anything on earth better than the city of Rome; do you think therefore that our city has a mind; that it thinks and reasons; or that this most

beautiful city, being void of sense, is not preferable to an ant, because an ant has sense, understanding, reason, and memory?

You should consider, Balbus, what ought to be allowed you, and not advance things because they please you. What I mean is that old, and as it seemed to you that acute, syllogism of Zeno, which you have so much enlarged upon. That which reasons is preferable to that which does not; nothing is preferable to the world; therefore the world reasons. If you would prove also that the world can very well read a book, follow the example of Zeno and say, that which can read is better than that which can not; nothing is better than the world; the world therefore can read. After the same manner you may prove the world to be an orator, a mathematician, a musician, that it possesses all sciences, and in short is a philosopher. You have often said that god made all things, and that no cause can produce an effect unlike itself°. From hence it will follow, not only that the world is animated and is wise, but also plays upon the fiddle and the flute, because it produces men who play on those instruments.

Zeno, therefore, the chief of your sect, advances no argument to induce us to think the world reasons, or indeed that it is animated, consequently none to think it a deity; though it may be said there is nothing better, as there is nothing more beautiful, nothing more useful to us, nothing more adorned, and nothing more regular in its motions.

° That is, unlike its original kind, as a man will produce a man; a dog, a dog; a cedar, a cedar, etc. Every seed bringing forth the fruit which is in that seed.

But if the world, in its universality, is not god, you should not surely deify, as you have done, that infinite multitude of stars which so delight you with the regularity of their eternal courses; not but that there is something truly wonderful and incredible [p] in their constancy; but the regularity of motion, Balbus, may as well be ascribed to a natural as to a divine cause. What can be more regular than the flux and reflux of the Euripus [q] at Chalcis, the Sicilian sea, and the violence of the ocean in those parts [r];

Where the rapid tide
Does Europe from the Libyan coast divide.

The same appears on the Spanish and British coasts. Must we conclude that some deity appoints and directs these ebbings and flowings to certain fixed times? Consider, I pray, that if everything which is regular in its motion is deemed divine, tertian and quartan agues must likewise be so, as their returns have the greatest regularity. These effects are to be explained by reason; but, because you are unable to assign any, you have recourse to a deity as your last refuge.

The arguments of Chrysippus appeared to you of great weight; a man undoubtedly of great quickness and subtilty (I call those quick who have a sprightly turn of thought, and those subtile whose minds are seasoned by use as their hands are by labour); if, says he, there is anything which is beyond the power of man to pro-

[p] I cannot think that the Academic has made a good choice of a word, in calling what is evident, incredible.

[q] The Euripus is a narrow sea between Bœotia and Eubœa, which is said to ebb and flow seven times a day.

[r] The straits of Gibraltar.

duce, the being who produces it is better than man. Man is unable to make what is in the world; the being therefore that could do it is superior to man. What being is there but a god superior to man? therefore there is a god. These arguments are founded on the same erroneous principles as Zeno's, for he does not define what is meant by being better or more excellent, or distinguish between an intelligent cause and a natural cause.

Chrysippus adds, if there are no gods, there is nothing better than man; but we cannot, without the highest arrogance, have this idea of ourselves. Let us grant that it is arrogance in man to think himself better than the world; but to comprehend that he has understanding and reason, and that in Orion and Canicula there is neither, is no arrogance but an indication of good sense.

Since we suppose, continues he, when we see a beautiful house, that it was built for the master and not for mice, we should likewise judge that the world is the mansion of the gods. Yes, if I believed that the gods built the world; but I believe, and I shall prove, that it is the work of nature.

Socrates, in Xenophon, asks whence had man his understanding, if there was none in the world? And I ask, whence had we speech, harmony, singing; unless we think it is the sun conversing with the moon when she approaches near it, or that the world forms an harmonious concert, as Pythagoras imagines?

This, Balbus, is the effect of nature; not of that nature which proceeds artificially, as Zeno says, and which I shall presently examine into, but a nature which, by its own proper motions and mutations, modi-

fies everything. For I readily agree to what you said, that all parts are firmly bound and united together, as it were, by ties of blood; but I do not approve of what you added, that it could not possibly be so unless endued with a divine spirit. On the contrary, the whole subsists by the power of nature, independently of the gods, and there is a kind of sympathy (as the Greeks call it) which joins together all the parts of the universe, and the greater that is in its own power, the less is it necessary to have recourse to a divine intelligence.

But how will you get rid of the objections which Carneades made. If, says he, there is no body immortal there is none eternal; but there is no body[a] immortal, nor even indivisible, or that cannot be separated; and as every animal is in its nature passive, they are subject to the impressions of extraneous bodies; and if every animal is mortal, there is none immortal; so likewise, if every animal may be divided, there is none indivisible, none eternal; but all are affected by external power; every animal therefore is necessarily mortal, dissoluble, and divisible.

As there is no wax, no silver, no brass, which cannot be converted into something else, whatever is composed of them may cease to be what it is; by the same reason, if all the elements are mutable, every body is mutable. Now, according to your doctrine, all the elements are mutable; all bodies therefore are mutable. But if there was any body immortal, all bodies would not be mutable. Every body then is mortal; for every body is either water, air, fire, or earth, or composed of the

[a] Carneades means that no body is immortal in its manner of existence; the modification of all body being, in his opinion, mutable.

four elements together, or of some of them. Now there is nothing of all these that do not perish; for earthly bodies are fragile; water is so soft that the least shock will separate its parts, and fire and air yield to the least impulse, and are subject to dissipation; besides, any of these elements perish when converted into another nature; as when water is formed from earth, the air from water, and the sky from air; and when they change in the same manner back again. Therefore, if there is nothing but what is perishable in the composition of all animals, there is no animal eternal.

But, not to insist on these arguments, there is no animal to be found that had not a beginning and will not have an end; for every animal being sensitive, they are consequently all sensible of cold and heat, sweets and bitters; nor can they have pleasing sensations without being subject to the contrary. As therefore they receive pleasure, they likewise receive pain; and whatever being is subject to pain, must necessarily be subject to death; it must be allowed, therefore, that every animal is mortal.

A being that is not sensible of pleasure or pain cannot have the essence of an animal; if then, on the one hand, every animal must be sensible of pleasure and pain, and if, on the other, every being that has these sensations cannot be immortal, we may conclude that as there is no animal insensible, there is none immortal.

Besides, there is no animal without inclination and aversion; an inclination to that which is agreeable to nature, and an aversion to the contrary; there are for every animal some things which they covet, and others

they reject; what they reject are repugnant to their nature, and consequently would destroy them. Every animal therefore is inevitably subject to be destroyed.

There are innumerable arguments to prove that whatever is sensitive is perishable; for cold, heat, pleasure, pain, and all that affects the sense, when they become excessive, cause destruction; since then there is no animal that is not sensitive, there is none immortal.

The substance of an animal is either simple or compounded; simple, if it is only of earth, of fire, of air, or of water (and of such a sort of being we can form no idea); compounded, if it is formed of different elements, which have each their proper situation, and have a natural tendency to it; this to the highest, that to the lowest, and another to the middle. This conjunction may for some time subsist, but not for ever; for every element must return to its first situation; no animal therefore is eternal.

Your sect, Balbus, allow fire only to be the sole active principle; an opinion which I believe you have from Heraclitus, whom some men understand in one sense, some in another; but since he seems to be unwilling to be understood, we will pass him by. You Stoics then say, that fire is the universal principle of all things; that all living bodies are animated by heat; and that the extinction of that heat deprives them of life.

Now I cannot conceive that bodies should perish for want of heat rather than for want of moisture or air, especially as they even die through excess of heat; so that the life of animals does not depend more on fire than on the other elements. However, let us see to

what this tends. If I am not mistaken, you believe that in all nature there is nothing but fire which is self-animated. Why fire rather than air, of which the life of animals consists, and which is called from thence *anima*[t], the soul? Do you take it for granted that life is nothing but fire? It seems more probable that it is a compound of fire and air.

But if fire is self-animated, unmixed with any other element, it must be sensitive, because it renders our bodies sensitive; and the same objection which I just now made will arise, that whatever is sensitive must necessarily be susceptible of pleasure and pain, and whatever is sensible of pain is likewise subject to the approach of death; therefore you cannot prove fire to be eternal.

You Stoics hold that all fire has need of nourishment, without which it cannot possibly subsist; that the sun, moon, and all the stars, are fed either with fresh or salt waters; and the reason that Cleanthes gives why the sun is retrograde, and does not go beyond the tropics in the summer or winter, is, that

[t] The common reading is *ex quo anima dicitur*; but Dr. Davis and M. Bouhier prefer *animal*, though they keep *anima* in the text, because our author says elsewhere *animum ex anima dictum*, Tusc. l. 1. Cicero is not here to be accused of contradictions; for we are to consider that he speaks in the characters of other persons; but I see nothing in these two passages irreconcileable, and am inclined to think *anima* the right word here. The meaning is plainly this; why is fire called self-animated, rather than air, of which the life (for *animus* is used here, and immediately after, as *vita*) of animals consists, and from which it is called *anima*, the life or soul? I am the more confirmed in this reading from our author's using the adjective *animalis* a little before in the same sense with *æria*, where he says, *aut simplex est natura animantis, ut vel terrena sit, vel igĥea, vel animalis vel humida*, etc. The strength of the argument turns chiefly on the double signification of the Latin word *anima*, which sometimes signifies air, sometimes life or soul.

he may not be too far from his sustenance. This I shall fully examine hereafter; but at present we may conclude that whatever may cease to be, cannot of its own nature be eternal; that if fire wants sustenance it will cease to be; and that therefore fire is not of its own nature eternal.

After all, how can we imagine a deity that is not graced with one single virtue? Must we not attribute prudence to a deity? a virtue which consists in the knowledge of things good, bad, and indifferent. What need has a being for the discernment of good and ill who neither has nor can have any ill? Of what use is reason and understanding? They serve us indeed to find out things obscure by those which are clear to us; but there is no obscurity to a deity. As to justice, which gives to every one his own, it is not the concern of the gods; since that virtue, according to your doctrine, received its birth from men and from civil society. Temperance consists in abstinence from corporeal pleasures, and if such abstinence has a place in heaven, so also must the pleasures. Lastly, if fortitude be ascribed to the deity, how does it appear? In afflictions, in labour, in danger? These affect him not. How then can we conceive this to be a deity that makes no use of reason, nor is endowed with any virtue.

When I consider what is advanced by the Stoics, my contempt for the ignorant vulgar vanishes. These are their divinities. The Syrians worshipped a fish. The Egyptians consecrated beasts of almost every kind. The Greeks deified many men; as Alabandus[u] at

[u] He is said to have led a colony from Greece into Caria in Asia, and to have built a town and called it after his own name, for which his countrymen paid him divine honours after his death.

Alaband; Tenes[x] at Tenedos; and all Greece pay divine honours to Leucothea[y], who was before called Ino, to her son Palæmon, to Hercules, to Æsculapius, and to the Tyndaridæ[z]; our people to Romulus, and to many others, whom, as citizens newly admitted into the ancient body, they imagine have been received into heaven.

These are the gods of the illiterate! How much more reasonable are the notions of you philosophers? I shall pass them over; for they are excellent surely. Let the world then be a deity, for that I conceive is what you mean by

> the refulgent heav'n above,
> Which all men call, unanimously, Jove.

But why are we to add many more gods? What a multitude of them there is! at least it seems so to me; for every constellation according to you is a deity; to some you give the names of beasts, as the goat, the scorpion, the bull, the lion; to others the names of inanimate things, as the ship, the altar, the crown. But supposing these were to be allowed, how can the rest be granted, or even so much as understood? When we call corn Ceres, and wine Bacchus, we make use of the

[x] Tenes was a son of Cygnus, and built a temple at Tenedos, an isle in the Ægean sea, and was afterwards consecrated himself.

[y] The story which is told of Ino is, that when she saw her husband Athamas in his madness slay one son, she caught the other up in her arms, and threw herself and him into the sea, and they were afterwards worshipped as deities of the ocean; she by the name of Leucothea, and he by the name of Palæmon. These were worshipped, as Cotta says, by all Greece, which, with other instances mentioned here, is sufficient to show the absurdity of founding an argument on the popularity of any religion for the truth of it.

[z] Castor and Pollux.

common manner of speaking; but do you think any one so mad as to believe that his food[a] is a deity?

With regard to those whom, you say, from men became gods, I should be very willing to learn of you, either how it was possible formerly, or, if it had ever been, why it is not so now? I do not conceive, as things are at present, how Hercules,

——Burnt with fiery torches on mount Œta,

as Accius says, should rise, with the flames,

To the eternal mansions of his father.

Besides, Homer also says that Ulysses[b] met him in the shades below, amongst the other dead.

But yet I should be glad to know which Hercules we should chiefly worship; for they who have searched into those histories which are but little known, tell us of several. The most ancient is he who fought with Apollo about the tripos of Delphi, and is son of Jupiter and Lisyto; and of the most ancient Jupiters too, for we find many Jupiters also in the Grecian chronicles. The second is the Egyptian Hercules, and is believed to be the son of Nilus, and to be the author of the

[a] What would the Academic think of the doctrine of transubstantiation, was he now living?

[b] Our great author is under a mistake here. Homer does not say he met Hercules himself, but his εἴδωλον, his visionary likeness; to which he adds this material circumstance:

αὐτὸς δὲ μετ' ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι
Τέρπεται ἐν θαλίῃς, καὶ ἔχει καλλίσφυρον Ἥβην.

He banquets with the gods, and by his side
Fair Hebe sits, his ever-blooming bride. Odyssey.

Phrygian characters[c]. The third to whom they offered sacrifices, is one of the *Idæi Dactyli*[d]. The fourth is the son of Jupiter and Asteria, the sister of Latona, chiefly honoured by the Tyrians, who pretend that Carthago[e] is his daughter. The fifth, called Belus, is worshipped in India. The sixth is the son of Alcmena by Jupiter; but by the third Jupiter, for there are many of them, as you shall soon see.

Since this examination has led me thus far, I will convince you that in matters of religion the pontifical rites, the customs of our ancestors, and the vessels of Numa[f], which Lælius mentions in his little golden oration, are more to be depended on than the doctrine of the Stoics; for tell me, if I were of your sect, what answer could I make to these questions? If there are gods, are nymphs also goddesses? if they are goddesses, are Pans and Satyrs in the same rank? but these are not; consequently nymphs are not goddesses. Yet they have temples publicly dedicated to them.

[c] P. Hardouin communicated the following note upon this passage to the Abbe d'Olivet. *Fictus ille Hercules, non alius quam Moses est; quem mater exposuit in carecti fluminis Nili, et reipsa Ægyptius fuit, et literas Judaicas, sive libros legum rerumque Hebraicarum conscripsit hoc est, Pentateuchum. Dicuntur autem eæ literæ Phrygiæ, quoniam succensis à Nabuchodonosora Hierosolymis Judæus fuit φρύγεις, crematus, seu tostus.* I shall make no remark upon this conceit of Hardouin, but leave it to the reader.

[d] They are said to have been the first workers in iron. They were called *Idæi* because they inhabited about mount Ida in Crete, and *Dactyli* from Δακτύλοι (the fingers) their number being five. Diodorus Siculus and Strabo both mention a Hercules amongst them. We have a title of a poem, remaining amongst the titles of the lost works of Hesiod, called *Idæi Dactyli*.

[e] From whom, some say, the city of that name was called.

[f] *Capeduncula* seem to have been bowls, or cups, with handles on each side, set apart for the use of the altar. Davis.

What do you conclude from thence? Others who have temples are not therefore gods.

But let us go on. You call Jupiter and Neptune gods; their brother Pluto then is one; and if so, those rivers also are deities, which they say flow in the infernal regions, Acheron, Cocytus, Pyriphlegethon; Charon, also, and Cerberus are gods; but that cannot be allowed; nor can Pluto be placed amongst the deities; how then can his brothers?

Thus reasons Carneades; not with any design to destroy the existence of the gods (for what would less become a philosopher?), but to convince us that, on that matter, the Stoics have said nothing plausible.

If then Jupiter and Neptune are gods, adds he, can that divinity be denied to their father Saturn, who is principally worshipped throughout the west? If Saturn is a god, then must his father Heaven be one; and the parents of Heaven, which are the Sky and Day, must be deities too, as also their brothers and sisters, which, by ancient genealogists, are thus named[g]: Love, Deceit, Fear, Labour, Envy, Fate, Old Age, Death, Darkness, Misery, Lamentation, Favour, Fraud, Obstinacy, the Destinies, the Hesperides, and Dreams; which are all the offsprings of Erebus and Night. These monstrous deities, therefore, must be received, or those from whom they sprung be disallowed.

If you say that Apollo, Vulcan, Mercury, and the rest of that sort, are gods, can you doubt the divinity of Hercules, Æsculapius, Bacchus, Castor, and Pollux? These are worshipped as much as those, and even

[g] This mythological stuff is more largely to be seen in the Theogony of Hesiod, and in Apollodorus.

more in some places. Therefore they must be numbered among the gods, though on the mother's side they are not of race divine.

Aristæus, said to be the son of Apollo, and to have found out the art of making oil from the olive; Theseus, the son of Neptune; and the rest, whose fathers were deities, shall they not be placed in the number of the gods?

But what think you of those whose mothers were goddesses! they surely have a better title to divinity; for, in the civil law, as he is a freeman who is born of a freewoman, so, in the law of nature, he whose mother is a goddess, must be a god[h]. The isle Astypalæa religiously honour Achilles: and if he is a deity, Orpheus and Rhesus are so, who were born of one of the muses; unless perhaps there may be a privilege belonging to sea-marriages which land-marriages have not. Orpheus and Rhesus are nowhere worshipped, and if they are therefore not gods, how are the other deities? You, Balbus, seemed to agree with me that the honours they received were not from their being regarded as immortals, but as men replete with other virtues.

Since you think Latona a goddess, will you not allow Hecate to be one also, who was the daughter of Asteria, Latona's sister? Certainly; if we may judge by the altars erected to her in Greece. And if Hecate is a goddess, can you refuse that rank to the Eumenides; for they also have a temple at Athens, and, if I understand right, the Romans have consecrated a grove to them. The Furies too, whom we look upon as the

[h] This is a pleasant ridicule of the Greek and Roman theology.

inspectors into, and scourges of, impiety, I suppose must have their divinity.

As you hold that there is some divinity presides over every human affair, there is one destined for childbirths, whose name is derived, *a nascentibus*, from nativities, and to whom we used to sacrifice in our processions in the fields of Ardæa; but if she is a deity, we must likewise acknowledge all those you mentioned, Honour, Faith, the Mind, Concord; by the same rule also Hope, Juno Moneta[i], and every idle phantom, every child of our imagination, are deities. But as this consequence is not probable, do not then defend the cause from which it flows.

What say you to this? If these are deities, which we worship and regard as such, why are not Serapis[k] and Isis placed in the same rank? And if they are admitted, what reason have we to reject the gods of the barbarians? Thus we should deify oxen, horses, the ibis, hawks, asps, crocodiles, fishes, dogs, wolves, cats, and many other beasts. If we go back to the source of this superstition, we must equally condemn all the deities from which they proceed.

Shall Ino, whom the Greeks call Leucothea, and we Matuta, be reputed a goddess, because she was the daughter of Cadmus, and shall that title be refused to Circe and Pasiphae[l], who had the Sun for their father,

[i] See *Cicero de Divinatione* and *Ovid. Fast.*

[k] In the consulship of Piso and Gabinius, sacrifices to Serapis and Isis were prohibited in Rome; but the Roman people afterwards placed them again in the number of their gods. See Tertullian's Apol. and his first book *ad Nationes*, and *Arnobius*, lib. 2. Davis.

[l] In some copies Circe, Pasiphae, and Ææ are mentioned together; but Ææ is rejected by the most judicious editors.

and Perseis, daughter of the Ocean, for their mother? It is true Circe has divine honours paid her by our colony of Circæum, therefore you call her a goddess; but what will you say of Medea, the granddaughter of the Sun and the Ocean, and daughter of Æetes and Idyia? What will you say of her brother Absyrtus[m], whom Pacuvius calls Ægialeus, though the other name is more frequent in the writings of the ancients? If you did not deify one as well as the other, what will become of Ino? for all these deities have the same original[n].

Shall Amphiaraus and Tryphonius be called gods? Our publicans[o], when some lands in Bœotia were exempted from the tax, as belonging to the immortal gods, denied that any were immortal who had been men. But if you deify these, Erectheus[p] surely is a god, whose temple and priest we have seen at Athens. And can you then refuse to acknowledge also Codrus[q] and many others, who shed their blood for the pre-

[m] Absyrtus was the brother of Medea, whose limbs she tore in pieces, and scattered them to stop her father's pursuit after her, when she fled with Jason.

[n] That is, the religion of the vulgar.

[o] Amphiaraus and Tryphonius were worshipped in Bœotia; and when the fields in which they were worshipped were exempted by the censors from paying tribute to the Romans, the publicans, or collectors of the tax, excepted against their divinity. See Bayle's Dictionary; art. Amphiaraus.

[p] He was an Athenian king, and is said to have sacrificed one of his daughters, upon the oracle's saying that the Athenians should overcome the Thracians, if Erectheus sacrificed one of his daughters. He afterwards sacrificed his other three daughters, who all voluntarily offered themselves for the good of their country.

[q] Codrus was the last king of Athens; who in a disguise exposed himself to the enemy and was killed, because the oracle said, that they should get the victory whose general should happen to be slain.

servation of their country? Either allow this divinity to all or to none.

It is easy to observe likewise, that if many have paid divine honours to the memory of those who have signalized their courage, it was to animate others to virtue, and to expose themselves the more willingly to dangers in their country's cause. From this motive the Athenians have deified Erectheus and his daughters, and have erected also a temple called Leocorion, to the daughters of Leus[r]. Alabandus is more honoured in the city[s] which he founded, than any of the more illustrious deities; from thence Stratonicus[t] had a pleasant turn, as he had many, when he was troubled with an impertinent fellow, who insisted that Alabandus was a god, but that Hercules was not; very well, says he, then let the anger of Alabandus fall upon me, and that of Hercules upon you. Do you not consider, Balbus, to what lengths your arguments for the divinity of the heaven and the stars will carry you? you deify the sun and the moon, which the Greeks take to be Apollo and Diana. If the moon is a deity, the morning-star, the other planets, and all the fixed stars are also deities; and why shall not the rainbow be placed in that number? for it is so wonderfully beautiful, that it is justly said to be the daughter of Thaumas[u]. But if you deify the rainbow, what regard

[r] They were three, and are said to have averted a plague by offering themselves as a sacrifice. Where these horrid superstitions prevailed, how easy was it for the oracle to remove any innocent obnoxious person! Or, where a man was not easy to be removed, to wound him by obliging him to sacrifice a favourite child.

[s] Alabanda, a city in Caria.

[t] Plutarch mentions some of the facetious sayings of Stratonicus, who was a musician. Davis.

[u] So called from the Greek word θαυμάζω, *miror*, to wonder.

will you pay to the clouds, for the colours[x] which appear in the bow are only formed of the clouds, one of which is said to have brought forth the centaurs[y]; and if you deify the clouds, you cannot pay less regard to the seasons, which the Roman people have really consecrated; tempests, showers, storms, and whirlwinds must then be deities. It is certain, at least, that our captains used to sacrifice to the waves before they embarked.

As you deify the earth under the name of Ceres[z], and the ocean under that of Neptune; rivers and fountains have the same right. Thus we see that Maso, the conqueror of Corsica, dedicated a temple to a fountain; and the names of the Tiber, Spino, Almo, Nodinus, and other neighbouring rivers, are in the prayers[a] of the augurs; therefore, either the number of such deities will be infinite, or we must admit none of them, and wholly disapprove of such an endless series of superstition.

I proceed, Balbus, to answer those who say that, with regard to those deified mortals, so religiously and devoutly reverenced, the public opinion should have the force of reality.

To begin then; they who are called theologists say there are three Jupiters; two of Arcadia, one of which was the son of Æther and father of Proserpine and

[x] The Mosaic account of the cause of the rainbow is abundantly erroneous, if we give credit to ancient and modern observations.

[y] This alludes to the story of Ixion, who is said to have begot the centaurs on a cloud, with which Jupiter deceived him, when he attempted to lie with Juno, by putting a cloud before him in her likeness.

[z] She was first called Geres, from *gero* to bear.

[a] The word is *precatione*, which means the books, or forms of prayer, used by the augurs.

Bacchus; another the son of Heaven and father of Minerva, who is called the goddess and inventress of war; the third, born of Saturn in the Isle of Crete[b], where his sepulchre is shown[c].

The sons of Jupiter also, among the Greeks, have many names; first, the three who at Athens have the title of Anactes[d], Tritopatreus, Eubuleus, and Dionysius, sons of the most ancient king Jupiter and Proserpine; the next are Castor and Pollux, sons of the third Jupiter and Leda; and lastly, three others, by some called Alco[e], Melampus, and Emolus, sons of Atreus the son of Pelops.

As to the muses, there were at first four, Thelxiope, Acœde, Arche, and Melete, daughters of the second Jupiter; afterwards there were nine[f], daughters of the third Jupiter and Mnemosyne; there were also nine others, having the same appellations, born of Pierus and Antiopa, by the poets usually called Pieridæ and Pieriæ.

Though sol (the sun) is so called, you say, because he is *solus*, single; yet how many suns do theologists mention? There is one the son of Jupiter and grandson

[b] Cotta's intent here, as well as in other places, is to show how unphilosophical their civil theology was, and with what confusions it was embarrassed; which design of the Academic the reader should carefully keep in view, or he will lose the chain of argument.

[c] This may be looked upon as a scriptural language of the Greeks; similar to which we find an expression frequently used in the Jewish scripture, where it is often said, "and his sepulchre is seen even to this day."

[d] Anactes, Ἄνακτες, was a general name for all kings, as we find in the oldest Greek writers, and particularly in Homer.

[e] The common reading is Aleo; but I follow Lambinus and Davis, who had the authority of the best manuscript copies.

[f] Calliope, Clio, Erato, Thalia, Melpomene, Terpsichore, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, and Urania; of whose birth, names, and powers, Hesiod, in his Theogony, gives a very poetical description.

of Æther; another the son of Hyperion; a third who, the Egyptians say, was of the city Heliopolis, sprung from Vulcan the son of Nilus; a fourth is said to have been born at Rhodes of Acantho, in the times of the heroes, and was the grandfather[g] of Jalysus, Camirus, and Lindus; a fifth, of whom it is pretended Æta and Circe were born at Colchis.

There are likewise several Vulcans. The first (who had of Minerva that Apollo whom the ancient historians call the tutelary god of Athens), was the son of Cœlum; the second, whom the Egyptians call Opas[h], and whom they looked upon as the protector of Egypt, is the son of Nilus; the third, who is said to have been the master of the forges at Lemnos[i], was the son of the third Jupiter and of Juno; the fourth, who possessed the islands near Sicily, called Vulcaniæ, was the son of Menalius.

One Mercury had Cœlum for his father and Dies[k] for his mother; another, who is said to dwell in a cavern, and is the same as Trophonius, is the son of Valens and Coronis. A third, of whom, and of Penelope, Pan was the offspring, is the son of the third Jupiter and Maia. A fourth, whom the Egyptians think it a crime to name[l], is the son of Nilus. A fifth,

[g] *Avus* is the word in most editions, but Arnobius says that the fourth was the father of Jalysus, whom Acantho bore at Rhodes in the times of the heroes. Davis.

[h] Some prefer Phthas to Opas. See Dr. Davis's edition; but Opas is the generally received reading.

[i] One of the islands called Cyclades, in the Ægean sea.

[k] Some parts of nature are clothed in this prosopopœia, of the Firmament and the Day being the parents of Mercury.

[l] Similar to this is the Jewish superstition about a certain word. Davis.

whom they call in their language Thoth, as with them the first month of the year is called, is he whom the people of Pheneum worship[m], and who is said to have killed Argus, to have fled for it into Egypt, and to have given laws and learning to the Egyptians.

The first of the Æsculapii, the god of Arcadia, who is said to have invented the probe and bandages, is the son of Apollo. The second, who was killed with thunder, and is said to be buried in Cynosura[n], is brother of the second Mercury. The third, who is said to have found out the art of purging, and of drawing teeth, is the son of Arsippus and Arsinoe; in Arcadia are shown his tomb and the wood which is consecrated to him near the river Lusium.

I have already spoken of the most ancient of the Apollos, who is the son of Vulcan, and tutelar god of Athens. There is another, son of Corybas, and native of Crete, for which island he is said to have contended with Jupiter himself. A third, who came from the regions of the Hyperborei[o] to Delphi, is the son of the third Jupiter and of Latona. A fourth was of Arcadia, whom the Arcadians called Nomio[p], because they regarded him as their legislator.

There are likewise many Dianas. The first, who is thought to be the mother of the winged Cupid, is the daughter of Jupiter[q] and Proserpine. The second, who is more known, is daughter of the third Jupiter

[m] A town in Arcadia.
[n] In Arcadia.
[o] A northern people.
[p] So called from the Greek word *νόμος*, *lex*, a law.
[q] That is, of Jupiter Infernus, as Pluto is often called.

and of Latona. The third, whom the Greeks often call by her father's name, is the daughter of Upis[r] and Glauce.

There are many also of the Dionysi[s]. The first was the son of Jupiter and Proserpine. The second, who is said to have killed Nysa, was the son of Nilus. The third, who reigned in Asia, and for whom the Sabazia[t] were instituted, was the son of Caprius. The fourth, for whom they celebrate the Orphic festivals[u], sprung from Jupiter and Luna. The fifth, who is supposed to have instituted the Trieterides[x], was the son of Nysus and Thyone.

The first Venus, who has a temple at Elis[y], was the daughter of Cœlum and Dies. The second arose out of the froth of the sea, and had by Mercury the second Cupid. The third, the daughter of Jupiter and Diona, was married to Vulcan, but is said to have had Anteros[z] by Mars. The fourth was a Syrian,

[r] He is called Ὦπις in some old Greek fragments, and Οὖπις by Callimachus, in his Hymn on Diana.

[s] Bacchus was called Dionysus.

[t] Σαβάζιος Sabazius, is one of the names used for Bacchus, as we see it in the comedies of Aristophanes; and in the beginning of his comedy called Σφῆκες, *Vespæ*, verse the ninth, it is used for wine, as the word Bacchus is sometimes poetically used:

——— ὕπνος μ' ἔχει τις ἐκ Σαβαζίου.

"A drowsiness from Sabazius possesses me;" that is, "wine has made me sleepy."

[u] Sacred rites instituted to Bacchus by Orpheus.

[x] The Trieterides were rites so called, because they were performed every three years. Davis.

[y] A city in Peloponnesus.

[z] Anteros is the name of one of the Cupids. Ἔρως Ἄρεως μυθολογεῖται υἱός, says the etymologist; that is, Eros (Cupid) is fabled to be the son of Mars.

born of Tyro[a] who is called Astarte, and is said to have been married to Adonis.

I have already mentioned one Minerva, mother of Apollo. Another, who is worshipped at Sais, a city of Egypt, sprung from Nilus. The third, whom I have also mentioned, was daughter of Jupiter. The fourth sprung from Jupiter and Coryphe, the daughter of the Ocean; the Arcadians call her Coria, and make her the inventress of chariots. A fifth, whom they paint with wings at her heels, was daughter of Pallas, and is said to have killed her father, for endeavouring to violate her chastity.

The first Cupid is said to be the son of Mercury and the first Diana. The second of Mercury and the second Venus. The third, who is the same as Anteros, of Mars and the third Venus.

All these opinions arise from old stories, that were spread in Greece; the course of which, Balbus, you well know, ought to be stopped, lest religion should suffer. You Stoics, so far from refuting, give them authority, by the mysterious sense which you pretend
61 to find in them. Can you then think, after this plain refutation, there is need to employ more subtle reasonings[b]?

But to return from this digression. We see that the mind, faith, hope, virtue, honour, victory, health,

[a] There is in ancient authors the name of Tyro, a Thessalian, on whom Neptune is said to have begot Neleus and Pelias.

[b] M. le P. Bouhier, in his remark on this passage, suspects that there is a little hiatus here. The abbe d'Olivet thinks there is nothing wanting but a transposition of the words. He reads it thus, *Vestri autem non modo hæc non refellunt, verum etiam confirmant, interpretando, quorsum quidque pertineat. Num censes igitur subtiliore ratione opus esse ad hæc refellenda? Sed eo jam, unde huc digressi sumus, revertamur. Nam mentem, fidem, etc.*

concord, and things of such kind, are purely natural, and have nothing of divinity in them; for either they are inherent in us, as the mind, faith, hope, virtue, and concord; or to be desired, as honour, health, and victory. I know indeed they are useful to us, and see that statues have been religiously erected for them; but as to their divinity, I shall begin to believe it when you have proved it. Of this kind I may particularly mention fortune, ever inseparable from inconstancy and temerity, which are certainly unworthy a divine being.

But what delight do you take in the explication of fables, and in the etymology of names! That Cœlum was castrated by his son[c], and that Saturn was bound in chains by his son! By your defence of these, and such-like fictions, you would make the authors of them appear not only to be no fools, but to be very wise men. But the pains you take in your etymologies deserve our pity. That Saturn is so called because, *se saturat annis*, he is full of years; *Mavors*, Mars, because, *magna vortit*, he brings about mighty changes; Minerva, because, *minuit*, she diminishes, or because, *minatur*, she threatens; Venus, because *venit ad omnia*, she comes to all; Ceres, *a gerendo*, from bearing. How dangerous is this method! for there are many names would puzzle you. From what would you derive Vejupiter[d] and Vulcan? Though, indeed, if you can derive Neptune, *a nando*, from swimming, in which you seem to me to swim yourself more than Neptune, you may easily find the origin of all names, since it is founded only upon the conformity of some one letter.

[c] Saturn.

[d] He was worshipped by the Romans that he might do them no harm, not through any hopes of his doing good.

Zeno is put to the unnecessary trouble first, and after him Cleanthes and Chrysippus, of explaining mere fables, and giving reasons for the several appellations of every deity; which is really owning, that those we call gods are not the representations of deities, but natural things, and that to judge otherwise is an error; yet this error has so much prevailed, that pernicious things have not only the title of divinity ascribed to them, but have even sacrifices offered to them; for Fever has a temple on the Palatine[e] hill, and Orbona[f] another near that of the Lares (the household gods); and we see on the Exquiline[g] hill an altar consecrated to Ill-fortune.

Let all such errors be banished from philosophy, if we would advance in our dispute concerning the immortal gods, nothing unworthy immortal beings. I know myself what I ought to believe; which is far different from what you have said. You take Neptune for an intelligence pervading the sea. You have the same opinion of Ceres, with regard to the earth. I cannot, I own, find out, or in the least conjecture, what that intelligence of the sea or the earth is. To learn therefore the existence of the gods, and what they are, I must apply elsewhere, not to the Stoics.

Let us proceed to the two other parts of our dispute. First, whether there is a divine providence which governs the world; and lastly, whether that providence particularly regards mankind: for these are the remaining propositions of your discourse; and I think, if

[e] Palatium is one of the seven hills on which Rome was built.

[f] A goddess, who, according to the signification of her name, was said to deprive them of their children.

[g] Exquiliæ is another of the seven hills.

you approve of it, we should examine these more accurately. With all my heart, says Velleius, for I readily agree to what you have hitherto said, and expect still greater things from you.

I am unwilling to interrupt you, says Balbus to Cotta, but we will take another opportunity, and I shall effectually convince you. But——

[Here is a wide chasm in the original. What is lost probably may have contained great part of Cotta's arguments against the providence of the Stoics. Some of his arguments against a providence over particulars seem unanswerable; but I cannot think that all his quotations from the dramatic poets much illustrate what he advances against the usefulness of reason. As reason is that which leads the human mind to truth, that motion of the mind which does not lead to truth cannot be called reason, though there may appear a chain of thought in it.

Abbe d'Olivet, in his remarks upon this hiatus (which, for the benefit of the English reader, I have translated), says, that "we are unfortunately deprived of all the arguments of Cotta on the third proposition of Balbus, and part of his answer to the fourth.

"I cannot see any justice in the accusation against the primitive Christians, of having torn this passage out of all the manuscripts. What appearance is there, that through a pious motive they should erase this any more than many others in the same book, which they must undoubtedly have looked upon as no less pernicious?

"Arnobius, lib. 3, gives us room to suspect the pagans; for he informs us, that they were greatly incensed at some of Tully's books, which could be no other than those concerning the Nature of the Gods, and Divination; insomuch that they insisted on a solemn edict from the senate[h] to suppress and forbid the reading them, as favouring too much the Christian religion, and tending towards the subversion of paganism.

"Arnobius did not care for saying that these books directly proved the Christian religion, but only indirectly in the blow which they

[h] *Oportere statui per senatum, aboleantur ut hæc scripta, quibus Christiana religio comprobetur et vetustatis opprimatur auctoritas.*

gave to idolatry; and indeed what could attribute more to the opening the eyes of the pagans, and bringing them to an acknowledgment of their error, than what Tully here says in the person of Cotta? Their false gods are attacked by a Roman, by an augur, by an ancient and venerable consul. What could they say? Who could shut the mouth of one of their own priests; one who had been initiated into their sacred mysteries? For that reason, without doubt, this work was sentenced to the flames, with the Holy Bible, under the emperor Diocletian, according to a remark[1] of cardinal Baronius.

"But it is of no great importance whether we should impute the loss of this passage to Christian or pagan zeal; perhaps we can in justice accuse time only of this robbery, which has deprived us of so many other valuable books; however, it would not be amiss, on this occasion, to look over the two passages of this work preserved by Lactantius, and to endeavour, if possible, to supply the rest by our conjectures.

"The first passage cited by Lactantius, Div. Inst. lib. ii. cap. 3, runs thus: *Intelligebat Cicero, falsa esse, quæ homines adorarent; nam cum multa dixisset, quæ ad eversionem religionum valerent, ait tamen, non esse illa vulgo disputanda, ne susceptas publice religiones disputatio talis extinguat.* Cicero imagined that the religion which prevailed in the minds of men was erroneous; for though he said many things which would tend to the subversion of religion, yet he said that point should not be disputed by the vulgar, lest such disputation should extinguish public received religions.

"The second passage cited by Lactantius, ibid. cap. 8, is as follows: *Cicero de natura deorum disputans, sic ait; primum igitur non est probabile, eam materiam rerum, unde orta sunt omnia, esse divina providentia effectam; sed habere, et habuisse, vim et naturam suam. Ut igitur faber, cum quid ædificaturus est, non ipse facit materiam, sed ea utitur quæ sit parata; fictorque item cera; sic isti providentiæ divinæ materiam præsto esse oportuit, non quam ipse faceret, sed quam haberet paratam. Quod si non est a deo materia facta, ne terra quidem, et aqua, et aer, et ignis, a deo factus est.* 'Tully, disputing concerning the nature of the gods, says, it is not probable that matter,

[1] *Ad annum* 302. *num.* 67.

whence all things spring, should be the work of a divine providence, but a substance entirely depending on its own nature and strength. As neither the builder when he builds, nor the potter when he moulds, makes the materials himself, but uses those prepared for him, so there must necessarily be a matter, not made by, but prepared for the use of, divine providence. If therefore this matter is not the work of god, so neither is the earth, water, air, or fire.'

"As to the first of these passages, it is entirely clear; but the second, in which this proposition is confuted, viz. that matter, whence all things are formed, was made by divine providence, requires some explanation, lest we might from thence infer, that Tully had a true notion of the creation, properly so called.

"In order to judge of the reasonableness of this consequence, let us remember that Tully here attacks a Stoic. The Stoics held that fire, which they believed to be an intelligent being, was the sole active principle which formed the water, the earth, and the air; so that the last three elements were, properly speaking, only different modifications of the first. This we read in the second book.

"When therefore it is here said that matter, whence all things are formed, was made by divine providence, we are not by this to understand that the divine providence did in reality create, or draw out of nothing, this matter, but only modified it, and by the arrangement of its parts, which were before mixed and confounded, made the water, the earth, the air, and that gross body which we call fire.

"It may perhaps be objected that, by these words, *eam materiam rerum esse divina providentia effectam*, that matter is the work of divine providence, we are to understand the creation, properly so called, and that therefore my explanation is forced; to which I answer first, that to persuade us that Cicero had an opinion so very singular concerning the creation, an opinion which we meet with in no other part of his works, there is need of greater authority than a single passage, to which both the preceding and subsequent arguments are wanting. Secondly, I answer, that if the dispute is about the creation, properly so called, Cicero must forget against whom he is disputing; since, if the objection is about the creation, such an objection, so far from having been made to him by Balbus, is directly opposite to the principles of Balbus.

"Let us return then to the true sense of this passage, which may

probably help us to discover the method which Cicero took to refute the Stoics. We ought not, says he, to attribute the modifications of matter to a divine providence according to the Stoics, but to suppose in matter an intrinsic natural power, which renders all its modifications possible and necessary. *Primum igitur non est probabile, eam materiam rerum, unde orta sunt omnia, esse divina providentia effectam; sed habere, et habuisse, vim et naturam suam.*

"Such was Strato's system. No other principle of existence than the mechanic laws of an inanimate nature. All things are matter, and each particle of matter has a natural gravity, which, by its impulse, causes its necessary motions, from whence all its different modifications result. He himself (Strato) having studied every part of the universe, asserts that whatever is, or will be, must exist by motion and gravity. These are Cicero's words, Acad. Disp. 4. 38. *Ipse autem* (Strato) *singulas mundi partes persequens, quicquid aut sit, aut fiat, naturalibus fieri, aut factum esse docet ponderibus et motibus.*

"Besides this passage of Lactantius, by which we perceive that Cicero opposes the Stratonic to the Stoic system, I have observed elsewhere, that Cicero explained himself enough on that head in the remainder of his third book.

"But let us enter into a larger detail, and see, as far as we possibly can, upon what this confutation of the Stoics turns. In order to this we should remember that Balbus, in lib. 2, endeavours to prove the providence of the gods, on the foundation of three reasons.

"1. That the existence of the gods being once acknowledged, it follows that the world is governed by their wisdom. It may be easily supposed, that Cotta, denying the principles of the Stoics, would also deny their consequences; denying the gods to be such as the Stoics believed them, he would consequently deny the providence of those gods.

"2. That all being submitted to an intelligent nature, which placed the world in an exceeding fine order, it follows that all have been formed by animated principles. It is here, without doubt, that Cotta would show the system of Strato in its strongest light. But can he say anything that is reasonable to prove, that a world so well composed, so well governed, is the production of an inanimate nature? All that the successors of Cotta, all that impious men have said on this subject is to be lamented.

"3. The wonders that heaven and earth present to our eyes. It is easy for an Academic, who seeks only to combat with the most evident truths, to find something that might be mended in the construction of this world, considered only with respect to its usefulness to man in particular; Cotta has not failed to employ his best eloquence to dazzle mankind by arguments, such as are used by Lucretius in his fifth book, from verse 157 to 235, and Cicero himself, in his Academical Questions, lib. iv. cap. 38. Why so many plants? Why so many venomous beasts? Why so many barren lands? Why hail and storms that spoil the harvests? Why falls the rain into the sea, while the sands of Libya burn? Why such an innumerable quantity of stars in the night, since no one, nor all of them together, can furnish us with light sufficient to guide us, when the sun is at a distance? These, and a hundred more impertinent questions may be asked, when man would measure by his own weakness the infinite wisdom of the creator, and the natural perfection of his works.

"This is pretty near what can be brought into this third part, where Cotta is to confute the reasons by which Balbus would prove to him that a divine providence has made the world, and continues to govern it.

"As to the fourth part, the beginning of which is wanting, if we should fill up the space by our own conjectures, we must follow the same method we have done in the examination of the third. We must begin with an exact analysis, which will set before us all the proofs that are given by Balbus. These are reduced to the four following. 1. The structure of our bodies. 2. The perfections of our souls. 3. The usefulness of all that is in the world to us. 4. Divers examples of illustrious men who have been protected in a singular manner by the gods.

"Cicero, to preserve that air of freedom in his discourse which conversation requires, does not in this place take up the proofs of Balbus in the same order that they have been laid down; for this reason we have not the confutation of the third, although we have that of the second and fourth; but it is easy to see what might be made of the first and third, by a rhetorician, who studies to embellish paradoxes.

"In short, although the mechanism of the human body may be admirable, yet it must be confessed, that eloquence has a vast field to

range in, if she would describe our infirmities, our diseases, and our bodily wants. Cicero, Quest. Acad. iv. 27, carries the excess of his Pyrrhonism so far as to doubt whether man can be the work of an intelligent power. *Etiamne hoc affirmare potes, Luculle, esse aliquam vim, cum prudentia et consilio scilicet, quæ finxerit, vel, ut tuo verbo utar, quæ fabricata sit hominem?*

"I will not stop to show how the third proof of Balbus might be refuted. Cotta, to answer the detail which Balbus has given of things that are useful to us in the world, needs only give another of such things as are useless, or even pernicious. When there is no fixed principle, like the Christian faith, there is hardly anything but arguments may be advanced for and against it.

"It is by the invariable maxims of our faith, that we ought to fortify ourselves against the vain subtleties of impious men; and I will employ here only the words of holy writ, to destroy the reflections of Cotta to the second and fourth proofs of Balbus.

"He answers to the second, that human reason being oftener the cause of vice than of virtue, it is not to be believed that it can be a present from the divine goodness. Let us not make an apology for our reason; we have every moment proof of its weakness. But let us remember, that its defects come[k] not from its creator; that these are the consequences of the sin committed by the first man; that we are[l] the children of wrath, conceived in iniquity; but that notwithstanding this we[m] may do everything by the grace of him who strengthens us.

"In short, to attack the fourth proof of Balbus, Cotta opposes him by saying, that there are many crimes successful while virtue suffers. Others besides Cotta, the greatest saints, have raised[n] the same difficulty. There is only the Christian can answer it; the Christian knows no real good, but virtue; no real ill, but sin. The prosperity of the wicked is no scandal to him. He knows[o] that it will fade as a dream, and that the greater it has been, the more miserable[p]

[k] It is said after the creation of man, *viditque deus cuncta quæ fecerat, et erant valde bona.* Gen. i. 31.

[l] Ephes. ii. 3. Psalm l. 7.

[m] 1 Cor. xv. 10. Philip. iv. 13.

[n] Job, xxi. 7. Jer. xii. 1.

[o] Psalm lxxi. 10.

[p] Rev. xviii. 7.

will be its consequences. If God permits him to suffer, he looks upon it[q] as a happiness; he rejoices[r], he glories[s] in it. For what proportion[t] have his present pains to the future glory with which he shall be clothed! I make use only of the holy scriptures that I may anticipate the bad impressions which the discourse of Cotta might make on a Christian who might not always have the maxims of our faith in his memory. In matters of religion, when we have any doubt to overcome, or any difficulties to resolve, the way of divine authority is much better for us than that of reasoning. It is more sure, and more short. Our reason by itself is commonly more ingenious at leading us into snares, than at drawing us out of them.

"I am next to take notice, that Cicero, being willing to show how men might abuse their wit, begins here with examples taken out of some scraps of ancient tragedies; but I must confess that these fragments do not appear to me to be capable of a turn that would make them relished in France."

The reader will here observe that the learned Frenchman draws up his conclusion with knocking reason down, and setting up scripture as the sole rule of faith and conduct; but, as he rejects reason, he offers none for his great rule.]

Shall I adore, and bend the suppliant knee,
Who scorn their power, and doubt their deity[u]?

Does not Niobe here seem to reason, and by that reasoning to bring all her misfortunes upon herself? But what a subtle expression is the following!

On strength of will alone depends success;

A maxim capable of leading us into all that is bad.

[q] Matth. v. 5. [r] James, i. 2.
[s] Galat. vi. 14. [t] Rom. viii. 18.

[u] Niobe is in this passage persisting in her contention with Latona. Niobe was wife to Amphion, king of Thebes, by whom she had seven sons and seven daughters. She is said to have preferred herself to Latona, because of the number and beauty of her children. Latona had but two, which were Apollo and Diana, whom, as the nonsensical story continues, Latona spirited on to slay the children of Niobe; and Niobe herself was turned into a stone.

Though I'm confin'd, his malice[x] yet is vain,
His tortur'd heart shall answer pain for pain,
His ruin soothe my soul with soft content,
Lighten my chains, and welcome banishment!

This now is reason; that reason, which you say the divine goodness has denied to the brute creation, kindly to bestow it on men alone. How great, how immense the favour! Observe the same Medea flying from her father and her country;

The guilty wretch from her pursuer flies.
By her own hands the young Absyrtus[y] slain,
His mangled limbs she scatters o'er the plain;
That the fond sire might sink beneath his woe,
And she to parricide her safety owe.

Reflection, as well as wickedness, must have been necessary to the perpetration of such a fact; and did he too[z], who prepared that fatal repast for his brother, do it without reflection?

Revenge, as great as Atreus' injury,
Shall sink his soul and crown his misery[a].

Did not Thyestes himself, not content with having defiled his brother's bed (of which Atreus with great justice thus inveighs,

When faithless consorts in the lewd embrace
With vile adultery stain a royal race,

[x] Medea speaking of her father Æetes.

[y] Her brother; whose limbs she is said to have divided and scattered in the way, when her father Æetes pursued her as she fled with Jason.

[z] Atreus; who invited his brother to a feast, and served up his brother's children at the banquet, in revenge to Thyestes for having corrupted his wife.

[a] Our author quotes these two verses in his third book *de Oratore*, and in his Tusculan Disputations. They are taken, the learned say, from the Atreus of Accius, as are those which follow.

The blood thus mix'd in fouler currents flows,
Taints the rich soil and breeds unnumber'd woes),

did he not, I say, by that adultery aim at the possession of the crown? Atreus thus continues,

A lamb, fair gift of heav'n, with golden fleece[b],
Promis'd in vain to fix my crown in peace;
But base Thyestes, eager for the prey,
Crept to my bed and stole the gem away.

Do you not perceive that Thyestes must have had a share of reason proportionable to the greatness of his crimes; such crimes as are not only represented to us on the stage, but such as we see committed, nay often exceeded, in the common course of life? Private houses, public courts[c], the senate, the camp, allies, provinces, all agree that reason is the author of all the ill as well as all the good we do; that it makes few act well, but many ill; and that, in short, the gods had shown greater benevolence in denying us any reason at all than in sending us that which is so pernicious; for as wine is seldom wholesome, but often hurtful in diseases, we think it more prudent to deny it the patient, than to run the risk of so uncertain a remedy, so I do not know whether it would not be better for mankind to be deprived of wit, thought, and penetration, or what we call reason, a thing fatal to many and useful to few, than to have it bestowed upon them with so much liberality.

But if the divine will has really consulted the good

[b] This lamb is supposed to have been as the Palladium was to Troy, whoever, it was said, possessed it, should have the kingdom.

[c] The word *forum* was used both for the market-place, and for the place where courts were held for pleadings relating to the properties of men. It is most likely used in the last sense here.

of man in this gift of reason, the good of those men only was consulted, on whom a well-regulated one is bestowed; how few those are, if any, is very apparent. It is wrong to say that the gods consulted the good of a few only; it is better to think that they consulted the good of none.

You answer, that the ill use which a great part of mankind make of reason, no more takes away the goodness of the gods, who bestow it as a present of the greatest benefit to them, than the ill use which children make of their patrimony diminishes the obligation which they have to their parents for it.

We grant you this; but where is the similitude? It was far from Deianira's design to injure Hercules[d], when she made him a present of the shirt dipped in the blood of the centaurs. Nor was it a regard to the welfare of Jason of Pheræ, that induced the man who with his sword opened his imposthume, which the physicians had in vain attempted to cure[e].

Thus it often happens that an intended evil has turned to advantage, and a designed good to disadvantage. So that the quality of the gift is by no means a mark of the intention of the giver; neither does the benefit which may accrue from it, prove that it came

[d] Though Hercules burnt himself, as it is said, to avoid the torment which that shirt gave him, yet Deianira's good intentions were not defeated by any imprudence or ill conduct of Hercules. Therefore there is no similitude between this case and the gods giving reason to men. The case of Jason, which follows, is as little to the purpose.

[e] The story of Jason of Pheræ, a town in Thessaly, is this: he had an imposthume, for which he could get no cure; and the anguish of it was so great that he threw himself into the heat of battle, with the hopes of being slain, to be rid of his pain; but he received, from the sword of one of the enemy a stroke on the imposthume, which opened it, and the noxious humour discharging itself, he perfectly recovered.

from the hands of a benefactor. For, in short, what debauchery, what avarice, what crimes, amongst men do not owe their birth to thought and reflection, that is, to reason? To right reason, if their thoughts are conformable to truth; to bad reason, if they are not[f]. The gods only give us the mere faculty of reason, if we have any; the use or abuse of it depends entirely upon ourselves[g]; so that the comparison is not just between the present of reason given us by the gods, and a patrimony left to a son by his father; for after all, if the punishment of mankind had been the end proposed by the gods, what could they have given them more pernicious than this seed of all evil, reason; this slave of fear, injustice, and intemperance?

I mentioned just now Medea and Atreus, persons of high rank, who had used this reason only in the study of the most flagitious crimes; but even the trifling characters which appear in comedies supply us with the like instances of this reasoning faculty; for example, does not he, in the Eunuch, reason with some subtlety,

> What then must I resolve upon[h]?———
> She turn'd me out of doors; she sends for me back again;
> Shall I go; no, not if she were to beg it of me.

Another, in the Twins[i], making no scruple of opposing a received maxim, after the manner of the Academics,

[f] The meaning of this profound sentence is this; if a man thinks right, he is right; if wrong, he is wrong. The Academic does not talk as if he conceived rightly of reason, which is that power of the mind by which we are able to range and compare ideas, and to separate right from wrong.

[g] This sentiment of the Academic borders on the doctrine of freedom of will.

[h] These lines are in the first speech of the Eunuch of Terence.

[i] Synepheli, the Twins; a comedy of Cæcilius.

asserts, that when a man is in love and in want, it is pleasant

> To have a father, covetous, crabbed, and passionate,
> Who has no love or affection for his children.

This unaccountable opinion he strengthens thus:

> You may defraud him of his profits, or forge letters in his name,
> Or fright him by your servant into compliance;
> And what you take from such an old huncks,
> How much more pleasantly do you spend it?

On the contrary, he says that an easy, generous father, is an inconvenience to a son in love; for, says he,

> I cannot tell how to abuse so good, so prudent a parent,
> Who always foreruns my desires, and meets me purse in hand
> To support me in my pleasures: this easy goodness and generosity
> Quite defeat all my frauds, tricks, and stratagems[k].

[k] Here is one expression in the quotation from Cæcilius, that is not common to be met with; which is *præstigias præstrinxit;* the learned Lambinus gives *præstinxit*, for the sake, I suppose, of playing on words; because it might then be translated "he has deluded my delusions, or stratagems;" but *præstrinxit* is certainly the right reading. *Præstigiæ* are things which seem to be what they are not; *præstringere* is to confound and to dazzle; *præstigias præstrinxit* is therefore elegant, "he has confounded or *defeated* all my delusions, or stratagems," not *deluded* them, because the father used no delusions, but showed an open generosity. Plautus, in the first speech of his *Miles Gloriosus*, has this expression:

> ——— *contra conserta manu*
> *Oculorum præstringat aciem in acie hostibus.*

Pyrgopolynices, the bragging soldier, orders Artotrogus, his parasite, to get his shield ready and to make it bright, that it may dazzle the eyes of the enemy and confound them in the midst of battle. Plautus here plays with words, the one *acies* meaning the sharpness of sight, the other the front of battle, or battle in array.

What are these frauds, tricks, and stratagems, but the effect of reason? O excellent gift of the gods! Without this Phormio[l] could not have said:

Find me out the old man; I have got something hatching for him in my head.

But let us pass from the stage to the bar. The pretor[m] takes his seat. To judge whom? The man who set fire to our archives. How secretly was that villany conducted! Q. Sosius, an illustrious Roman knight of the Picene[n] field, confessed the fact. Who else is to be tried? He who forged the public registers; Alenus, an artful fellow, who counterfeited the handwriting of the six officers[o]. Let us call to mind other processes; that of the gold of Tolosa[p], the conspiracy of Jugurtha[q]. Let us trace back the informations laid against Tubulus[r] for bribery in his judicial office; and, since that, the proceedings of the tribune Peduceus concerning the incest of the vestals. Let us reflect upon the trials which daily happen for assas-

[l] In the first scene of the second act of the Phormio of Terence.

[m] The ancient Romans had a judicial as well as a military pretor, and he sat, with inferior judges attending him, like one of our chief justices. *Sessum it prætor*, which I doubt not is the right reading, Lambinus restored from an old copy. The common reading was *sessum ite precor*.

[n] Picenum was a region of Italy.

[o] The *sex primi* were general receivers of all taxes and tributes; and they were obliged to make good, out of their own fortunes, whatever deficiencies were in the public treasury.

[p] Which Q. Cæpio, when consul, seized at Tolosa, in France.

[q] *Conjuratio Jugurthina* here means, as Dr. Davis observes, the methods which that prince took to draw some of the Romans over to his party by bribes.

[r] Tubulus was pretor, and is said to have fled his country, at the expiration of the time of his pretorship, on account of the bribes which he openly received in his office.

sinations, poisonings, embezzlement of public money, frauds in wills, against which we have a new law; then that action against the advisers or assisters of any theft; the many laws concerning frauds in guardianship, breaches of trust in partnerships, and commissions in trade, and other violations of faith in buying, selling, borrowing, or lending; the public decree on a private affair by the Lætorian law[s]; and lastly, that scourge of all dishonesty, the law against fraud, proposed by our friend Aquillius; that sort of fraud, he says, by which one thing is pretended and another done.

Can we then think that this plentiful fountain of evil sprung from the immortal gods? If they have given reason to man they have likewise given him subtlety, for subtlety is only a deceitful manner of applying reason to do mischief. To them likewise we must owe deceit, and every other crime, which, without the help of reason, would neither have been thought of nor committed. As the old woman wished[t]

> That to the fir, which on mount Pelion grew,
> The axe had ne'er been laid,———

so we should wish the gods had never bestowed this

[s] The Lætorian law was a security for those under age, against extortioners, etc. By this law, all debts contracted under twenty-five years of age were void.

[t] This is a quotation from a tragedy of Ennius called Medea; in which the old woman (Medea's nurse) imputes all the evils which happened to Medea and her family, to the ship in which the Argonauts sailed; she therefore wishes that the wood of which it was built had never been felled; so the Academic imputes all human ills to reason, and therefore wishes there was no such thing. Nothing is more evident than that most human ills arise from a want of obedience to the rule of right, which is the result of reason.

ability on man; the abuse of which is so general, that the small number of those who make a good use of it, are often oppressed by those who make a bad use of it; so that it seems to be given rather to help vice than to promote virtue amongst us.

This, you insist on, is the fault of man, and not of the gods. But should we not laugh at a physician or pilot, though they are weak mortals, if they were to lay the blame of their ill success on the violence of the disease or the fury of the tempest? Had there not been danger, we should say, who would have applied to you? This reasoning has still greater force against the deity. The fault, you say, is in man, if he commits crimes. But why was not man endued with a reason incapable of producing any crimes? How could the gods err? When we leave our effects to our children, it is in hopes they are well bestowed, in which we may be deceived; but how can the deity be deceived? As Phœbus, when he trusted his chariot to his son Phaeton, or as Neptune, when he indulged his son Theseus in granting him three wishes, the consequence of which was the destruction of Hippolytus[u]? These are poetical fictions. Truth should proceed from philosophers. Yet, if those poetical deities had foreseen that their indulgence would have proved fatal to their sons, they must have been thought blamable for it.

[u] The three wishes of Theseus were, that he might be able to return from hell, to find his way out of the famous labyrinth, and that Neptune would forward the death of his son Hippolytus. Theseus's anger to his son arose from a false accusation of his attempting the virtue of his mother-in-law Phædra. Hippolytus is said to have been thrown out of his chariot, and killed, as he was flying from Theseus his father. Theseus was the son of Ægeus, and is here called the son of Neptune, because of his ferocity.

Aristo[x] of Chios used often to say, that the philosophers do hurt to such of their disciples as take their good doctrine in a wrong sense; thus the lectures of Aristippus[y] might produce debauchees, and those of Zeno pedants. If this be true, it were better that philosophers should be silent, than that their disciples should be corrupted by a misapprehension of their masters' meaning; so if reason, which was bestowed on mankind by the gods with a good design, tends only to make men more subtle and fraudulent, it had been better for them never to have received it. There could be no excuse for a physician who prescribes wine to a patient, knowing he would drink it and immediately expire. Your providence is no less blamable in giving reason to man, who, she foresaw, would make a bad use of it. Will you say she did not foresee it? I should be greatly pleased with that. But you dare not. I know what a sublime idea you entertain of her.

But to conclude. If folly, by the unanimous consent of philosophers, is allowed to be the greatest of all evils, and if no one ever attained to true wisdom, we, whom you say the immortal gods take care of, are consequently in a state of the utmost misery. For that nobody *is* well, or that nobody *can be* well, is in effect the same thing; and, in my opinion, that no man *is* truly wise, or that no man *can be* truly wise, is likewise the same thing. But I will insist no farther on so self-evident a point. Telamon, in one verse, decides the question. If, says he, there is a divine providence,

Good men would be happy, bad men miserable.

[x] Aristo was a Stoic, and a disciple of Zeno.

[y] He was scholar to Socrates.

But it is not so. If the gods had regarded mankind, they should have made them all virtuous, or at least those who were virtuous happy. Why therefore was the Carthaginian[z] in Spain suffered to destroy those best and bravest men, the two Scipios? Why did Maximus[a] lose his son, the consul? Why did Hannibal kill Marcellus? Why did Cannæ[b] deprive us of Paulus? Why was the body of Regulus[c] delivered up to the cruelty of the Carthaginians? Why was not Africanus[d] protected from violence in his own house?

To these, and many more ancient instances, let us add some of later date. Why is Rutilius[e], my uncle, a man of the greatest virtue and learning, now in banishment? Why was my friend Drusus assassinated in his own house? Why was Scævola, the high priest, that pattern of moderation and prudence, massacred

[z] This Carthaginian was Hasdrubal, brother to Hannibal. The two Scipios whom he killed were Cneius and Publius. They took great part of Spain from the Carthaginians, and lost it again.

[a] Q. Fabius Maximus, surnamed Cunctator, from *cunctando*, delaying, of whom Ennius says:

——————— *cunctando restituit rem,*

he restored affairs by delay.

[b] A village in Apulia, famous for Hannibal's great slaughter of the Romans: it is said he slew forty thousand, among whom was Paulus Æmilius, the consul.

[c] Marcus Attilius Regulus, a Roman consul, was taken prisoner by the Carthaginians in the first Punic war. He was sent back to Rome, in order to be exchanged for a number of Carthaginians, then prisoners, but made use only of this opportunity to persuade the Romans to make no exchange; and, having settled his affairs, chose rather to return to Carthage, where he was put to a cruel death.

[d] Scipio Africanus was suspected to have been murdered by his wife at his country-house.

[e] P. Rutilius was sentenced to banishment, on a false accusation of bribery, by a combination of the publicans, over whom he kept a strict hand in Asia.

before the statue of Vesta? Why, before that, were so many illustrious citizens put to death by Cinna? Why had Marius, the most perfidious of men, the power to cause the death of Catullus[f], a man of the greatest dignity? But there would be no end of enumerating examples of good men made miserable, and wicked men prosperous. Why did that Marius live to an old age, and die so happily at his own house, in his seventh consulship? Why was that inhuman wretch Cinna permitted to enjoy so long a reign? He, indeed, met with deserved punishment at last. But had it not been better that these inhumanities had been prevented, than that the author of them should be punished afterwards?

Varius, a most impious wretch, was given up to justice. If this was his punishment for the murdering Drusus by the sword, and Metellus by poison, had it not been better to have preserved their lives, than to have their deaths avenged on Varius?

Dionysius was thirty-eight years a tyrant over the most opulent and flourishing city[g]; and, before him, how many years did Pisistratus[h] tyrannize in the very flower of Greece?

Phalaris[i] and Apollodorus[k] met with the fate they deserved. But not till after they had tortured and put to death multitudes. Many robbers have been exe-

[f] He was an orator, and consul with Marius, who aiming at his life, Catullus shut himself in a close room, with a fire, and choked himself, to prevent the design of his enemy.

[g] Syracuse in Sicily.

[h] Pisistratus was thirty-three years tyrant over the Athenians. Davis. Cicero here rhetorically calls Athens the flower of Greece.

[i] Tyrant of Agrigentum in Sicily.

[k] Tyrant of Cassandrea, a city in Macedonia.

cuted; but the number of those who have suffered for their crimes, is short of those whom they have robbed and murdered.

Anaxarchus[l], a scholar of Democritus, was cut to pieces by command of the tyrant of Cyprus; and Zeno of Elea[m] ended his life in tortures. What shall I say of Socrates[n], whose death, as often as I read of it in Plato, draws fresh tears from my eyes?

If therefore the gods really see everything that happens to men, you must acknowledge they make no distinction between the good and the bad. Diogenes the Cynic used to say of Harpalus, one of the most fortunate villains of his time, that the constant prosperity of such a man was a kind of witness against the gods.

Dionysius, of whom we have before spoken, after he had pillaged the temple of Proserpine at Locris, set sail for Syracuse, and, having a fair wind during his voyage, said, with a smile, "see, my friends, what favourable winds the immortal gods bestow upon church robbers." Encouraged by this prosperous event, he

[l] Diogenes Laertius, says he was pounded to death in a stone mortar, by command of Nicocreon, tyrant of Cyprus. Nicocreon had some reason for his resentment, according to Laertius, who tells us that Anaxarchus, at a feast of Alexander's, said that everything was magnificent, and that there wanted nothing but the head of a certain noble person, looking steadfastly at Nicocreon. After the death of Alexander, Nicocreon revenged himself as related. The same biographer tells us, that Anaxarchus, as they were pounding him, cried out, "Grind, grind the vessel (meaning his body) of Anaxarchus, for you cannot hurt Anaxarchus."

[m] Elea, a city of Lucania in Italy. The manner in which Zeno was put to death, is, according to Diogenes Laertius, uncertain.

[n] That great and good man was accused of destroying the divinity of the gods of his country; he was condemned, and died by drinking a glass of poison.

proceeded in his impiety. When he landed at Peloponnesus, he went into the temple of Jupiter Olympius, and disrobed his statue of a golden mantle of great weight, an ornament which the tyrant Gelo[o] had given out of the spoils of the Carthaginians, and at the same time, in a jesting manner, said, that "a golden mantle was too heavy in summer, and too cold in winter;" then, throwing a woollen cloak over the statue, said, "this will serve for all seasons." At another time he ordered the golden beard of Æsculapius of Epidaurus[p] to be taken away, saying, that "it was absurd for the son to have a beard, when his father had none[q]." He likewise robbed the temples of the silver tables, which, according to the ancient custom of Greece, bore this inscription: TO THE GOOD GODS; saying, "he was willing to make use of their goodness;" and, without the least scruple, took away the little golden emblems of victory, the cups and coronets, which were in the hands of the statues, saying, "he did not *take* but *receive* them; for it would be folly not to accept good things from the gods, to whom we are constantly praying for favours, when they stretch out their hands towards us." In short, what he thus pillaged from the temples, were by his order brought to the market-place, and sold by the common crier; and after he had received the money for them, he commanded every purchaser to restore what he had bought, within a limited time, to the temples from whence they came. Thus to his impiety towards the

[o] Tyrant of Sicily.

[p] A city of Peloponnesus, where Æsculapius was worshipped.

[q] Æsculapius was usually represented with a beard, as an emblem of sagacity, proper for the god of physic; and his father Apollo without any, as an indication of perpetual youth.

gods, he added injustice to man. Yet neither did Olympian Jove strike him with his thunder, nor did Æsculapius cause him to die by tedious diseases, and a lingering death. He died in his bed, had funeral honours[r] done him, and left his power, which he had wickedly obtained, as a just and lawful inheritance to his son.

It is not without concern that I maintain a doctrine which seems to authorise evil, and which might probably give a sanction to it, if conscience, without any divine assistance, did not point out, in the clearest manner, the difference between virtue and vice. Without conscience man is contemptible. For as no family or state can be supposed to be formed with any reason or discipline, if there are no rewards for good actions, nor punishments for bad; so we cannot believe that a

[r] The common reading is *in tympanidis rogum inlatus est.* This passage has been the occasion of as many different opinions concerning both the reading and the sense, as any passage in the whole treatise. *Tympanum* is used for a timbrel or drum, *tympanidia* a diminutive of it. Lambinus says, *tympana* were sticks, with which the tyrant used to beat the condemned. P. Victorius substitutes *tyrannidis* for *tympanidis.* Athenæus says, that Timæus erected the funeral pile of Dionysius the tyrant, from which Dr. Davis starts this emendation, *in Timæi rogum;* that is, says he, the pile which Timæus raised. *Tympanis* is one of the various readings. Bouhier, amongst his readings, proposes *in pentapylis rogo illatus est,* but that is too arbitrary; and Markland has this conjecture, *triumphantis in modum in rogum illatus est,* which is a better sense, though not of authority, than any yet mentioned; he was carried to his pile in a triumphant manner. These are the most considerable of the various readings of this passage; which are of little importance to a translation, and of no great advantage in the original. Ancient authors differ as much about the death of this Dionysius, as the critics do about the reading of this passage. Justin says that he was killed by his own domestics. But Pliny, in his Natural History, says that he died with joy on the reception of the news of a victory, which is not different from what Diodorus Siculus says. Other authors give other accounts. See Cornelius Nepos in his Life of Dion, and Plutarch, who says he was poisoned by a sleepy potion, at the instigation of his son.

divine providence regulates the world, if there is no distinction between the honest and the wicked.

But the gods, you say, neglect trifling things; the little fields or vineyards of particular men are not worthy their attention; and if blasts or hail destroy their product, Jupiter does not regard it; nor do kings extend their care to the lower offices of government.

This argument might have some weight, if, in bringing Rutilius as an instance, I had only complained of the loss of his farm at Formiæ[s], but I spoke of a personal misfortune[t], his banishment.

All men agree that external benefits, as vineyards, corn, olives, plenty of fruit and grain, and in short every conveniency and property of life, are derived from the gods; and indeed with right reason; since by our virtue we claim applause, and in virtue justly glory, which we could have no right to do if it were the gift of the gods, and not a personal merit.

When we are honoured with new dignities, or blessed with increase of riches; when we are favoured by fortune beyond our expectation, or luckily delivered from any approaching evil, we return thanks for it to the gods, and assume no praise to ourselves. But who ever thanked the gods that he was a good man? We thank them indeed for riches, health, and honour. For those we invoke the best and greatest Jupiter; but not for wisdom, temperance, and justice. No one ever offered a tenth of his estate to Hercules to be made

[s] A city in Campania in Italy.

[t] The original is *de amissa salute*, which means the sentence of banishment amongst the Romans, in which was contained the loss of goods and estate, and the privileges of a Roman; and in this sense l'abbé d'Olivet translates it.

wise [u]. It is reported, indeed, of Pythagoras, that he sacrificed an ox to the muses, upon having made some new discovery in geometry [x]; but for my part I cannot believe it, because he refused to sacrifice even to Apollo at Delos, lest he should defile the altar with blood.

But to return. It is universally agreed that good fortune we must ask of the gods, but wisdom must arise from ourselves; and though temples have been consecrated to the mind, to virtue, and to faith, yet that does not contradict their being inherent in us. In regard to hope, safety, assistance, and victory, we must rely upon the gods for them; from whence it follows, as Diogenes said, that the prosperity of the wicked destroys the idea of a divine providence.

But good men have sometimes success. They have so; but we cannot with any show of reason attribute that success to the gods. Diagoras, who is called the atheist, being at Samothrace [y], one of his friends showed him several pictures [z] of people who had endured very dangerous storms; "See," says he, "you who deny a providence, how many have been saved by their prayers to the gods." "Aye," says Diagoras, "I see those who were saved, but where are those painted who were shipwrecked?" At another time he himself

[u] We may as reasonably thank the deity for wisdom as for wealth or honour, for they are equally the effects of natural causes.

[x] The forty-ninth proposition of the first book of Euclid is unanimously ascribed to him by the ancients. Dr. Wotton, in his Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning, says, "it is indeed a very noble proposition, the foundation of trigonometry, of universal and various use in those curious speculations about incommensurable numbers."

[y] An isle in the Ægean sea, not far from Thrace.

[z] These votive tables or pictures were hung up in the temples.

was in a storm, when the sailors, being greatly alarmed, told him they justly deserved that misfortune for admitting him into their ship; when he, pointing to others under the like distress, asked them if they believed Diagoras was also aboard those ships? In short, with regard to good or bad fortune, it matters not what you are, or how you have lived.

The gods, like kings, regard not everything. What similitude is there between them? If kings neglect anything, want of knowledge may be pleaded in their defence; but ignorance cannot be brought as an excuse for the gods. Your manner of justifying them is somewhat extraordinary, when you say, that if a wicked man dies without suffering for his crimes, the gods inflict a punishment on his children, his children's children, and all his posterity. O wonderful equity of the gods! What city would endure the maker of a law, which should condemn a son or a grandson for a crime committed by the father or the grandfather[a]?

> Shall Tantalus' unhappy offspring know
> No end, no close, of this long scene of woe?
> When will the dire reward of guilt be o'er,
> And Myrtilus demand revenge no more[b]?

[a] Plutarch relates in one of his treatises, that Bion says, "that if the gods punished the children of the wicked, it would be as ridiculous as the physician, who should apply a medicine to a son or grandson for the disease of the father or grandfather." D'Amyot.

[b] This passage is a fragment from a tragedy of Attius. Myrtilus was the son of Mercury, whom Pelops the son of Tantalus threw into the sea; and Tantalus is said to have served up his son Pelops at an entertainment, which he made for some of the gods, to see if their godships could discover the imposition; for which the poets and mythologists condemned him to hell, there to stand up to his chin in water, with delightful apples bobbing at his mouth, and unable either to catch the apples or to taste the water. Thyestes, Ægistus, Agamemnon, and Orestes, who were descendants of

Whether the poets have corrupted the Stoics, or the Stoics given authority to the poets, I cannot easily determine. Both alike are to be condemned. If those persons, whose names have been branded in the satires of Hipponax[c] or Archilochus[d], were driven to despair, it did not proceed from the gods, but had its birth in their own minds. When we see Ægistus and Paris lost in the heat of an impure passion, why are we to attribute it to a deity, when the crime, as it were, speaks itself? I believe that those who recover from illness are more indebted to the care of Hippocrates than to the power of Æsculapius; that Sparta received her laws from Lycurgus[e] rather than from Apollo; that those eyes of the maritime coast, Corinth and

Pelops, are all said to have died violent deaths; which were attributed to them by the poets, as visitations of the gods upon them for the sins of their forefathers. These tales may serve a poetical turn; but when such a doctrine as the innocent suffering for the guilty becomes a point of religion, it is a certain indication that the broacher or propagator of it is entirely ignorant of the nature of the deity. God may, as archbishop Tillotson has somewhere observed, in the following sense be said to visit the sins of the father upon the third and fourth generation; a parent may by his irregularities contract a disease, which shall descend to his posterity, and be the occasion of his children's coming into the world with an imperfect stamen of life. These are the inevitable effects of natural causes; but that God should afflict the innocent for the guilty is a doctrine as wicked as it is weak.

[c] Hipponax was a poet at Ephesus, who was so deformed that Bupalus drew a picture of him to provoke laughter; for which Hipponax is said to have written such keen iambics on the painter that he hanged himself.

[d] Lycambes had promised Archilochus the poet to marry his daughter to him, but afterwards retracted his promise, and refused her; upon which Archilochus is said to have published a satire in iambic verse, that provoked him to hang himself.

[e] When Lycurgus king of Sparta published his laws, he told the people that he was inspired by Apollo. This is an artifice which has been often practised; and indeed such a pretence may induce the people the more readily to receive the laws.

Carthage, were plucked out, the one by Critolaus[f], the other by Hasdrubal[g], without the assistance of any divine anger, since you yourselves confess, that a deity cannot possibly be angry on any provocation.

But could not the deity have assisted and preserved those eminent cities? Undoubtedly he could; for, according to your doctrine, his power is infinite and without the least labour; and as nothing but the will is necessary to the motion of our bodies, so the divine will of the gods, with the like ease, can create, move, and change all things. This you hold, not from a mere phantom of superstition, but on physical and settled principles of reason; for matter, you say, of which all things are composed and consist, is susceptible of all forms and changes, and there is nothing which cannot be, or cease to be, in an instant, and that divine providence has the command and disposure of this universal matter, and consequently can, in any part of the universe, do whatever she pleases. From whence I conclude that this providence[h] either knows not the extent of her power, or neglects human affairs, or cannot judge what is best for us.

Providence, you say, does not extend her care to particular men. There is no wonder, since she does

[f] Critolaus was general of the Achaians, who, by his committing violence on the Roman ambassador, occasioned a war, which ended in the destruction of Corinth.

[g] Hasdrubal's cruelty to the Roman soldiers, under the Scipios in Spain, provoked Publius Cornelius Scipio to burn and utterly destroy Carthage.

[h] The Academic makes this inference from the stoical doctrine of providence; nor is it an unjust inference. The doctrine of a deity is not to be defended without making all his actions necessary; that is, all his designs the necessary result of infinite wisdom; and all his actions the necessary result of infinite power. There can therefore be no favour or affection in the deity towards particulars.

not to cities, or even to countries or people. If therefore she neglects whole nations, is it not very probable that she neglects all mankind?

But how can you assert that the gods do not enter into all the little circumstances of life, and yet hold that they distribute dreams among men? Since you believe in dreams, it is your part to solve this difficulty.

Besides, you say we ought to call upon the gods. Those who call upon the gods are particulars. Divine providence therefore regards particulars; which consequently proves they are more at leisure than you imagine.

Let us suppose the divine providence to be greatly busied; that she turns about the heavens, supports the earth, and rules the seas; why does she suffer so many gods to be unemployed? Why is not the superintendence of human affairs given to some of those idle deities, which you say are innumerable?

This is the purport of what I had to say concerning the nature of the gods; not with a design to destroy their existence, but merely to show what an obscure point it is, and with what difficulties an explanation of it is attended.

Balbus, observing that Cotta had finished his discourse, you have been very severe, says he, against the being of a divine providence; a doctrine established by the Stoics with piety and wisdom; but as it grows too late I shall defer my answer to another day. Our argument is of the greatest importance; it concerns our altars[1], our hearths, our temples, nay, even the

[1] *Pro aris et focis* is a proverbial expression. The Romans, when they would say their all was at stake, could not express it stronger than by

walls of our city, which you priests hold sacred; you, who by religion defend Rome better than she is defended by her ramparts. This is a cause which, whilst I have life, I think I cannot abandon without impiety.

There is nothing, replied Cotta, I desire more than to be confuted. I have not pretended to decide this point, but to give you my private sentiments upon it; and am very sensible of your great superiority in argument.

No doubt of it, says Velleius; we have much to fear from one who believes our dreams are sent from Jupiter, which, though they are of little weight, are yet of more importance than the discourse of the Stoics concerning the nature of the gods.

The conversation ended here and we parted. Velleius judged that the arguments of Cotta were truest; but those of Balbus seemed to me to have the greater probability [k].

saying they contended *pro aris et focis*, for religion and their firesides, or, as we express it, for religion and property.

[k] Cicero, who was an Academic, gives his opinion according to the manner of the Academics; who looked upon probability, and a resemblance of truth, as the utmost they could arrive at.

AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

ASTRONOMY AND ANATOMY

OF

THE ANCIENTS.

By Thomas [illegible]

AN INQUIRY INTO THE

ASTRONOMY AND ANATOMY

OF

THE ANCIENTS.

IN the following inquiry I am no more zealous for the honour of the ancients, than for that of the moderns; but my intent is to pursue my inquiry into the astronomy of the ancients farther than I have yet seen it carried; and I cannot avoid saying, that I am afraid that several worthy and able writers have been obstructed in their examinations into this and some other subjects, by their attachment to particular systems of religion; which seems to have been the case of the author of one of the most entertaining books that has been written on the same subject: I mean Mr. Baker's Reflections upon Learning; in which, with great knowledge and genius, he endeavours to show the insufficiency of human reason; but I fear whenever we forsake that to follow any other guide, it is like the blind leading the blind.

Dr. Halley says[a] that Thales was the first who could predict an eclipse in Greece, about six hundred years before Christ; but from the seven eclipses which he mentions, preserved in Ptolemey's Syntaxis, the oldest

[a] In his Discourse on Ancient and Modern Astronomy, printed in the 24th chapter of Dr. Wotton's Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning.

above seven hundred years before Christ, we may naturally conclude that those observations were not in the infancy of knowledge amongst the Chaldæans.

Hipparchus, says our learned astronomer, made the first catalogue of the fixed stars not above a hundred and fifty years before Christ; without which catalogue there could be scarce such a science as astronomy. With submission to his superior judgment in this noble science, I shall prove that a catalogue of the fixed stars was made long before Hipparchus. Aratus, who lived near, if not full, three hundred years before Christ, gave an exact catalogue of the fixed stars in his Phœnomena; which poem, written in Greek by Aratus, is partly translated into Latin by Cicero, in the second book of the Nature of the Gods; and what we have of Hipparchus is a comment on the Phœnomena of Aratus; and he there accuses Aratus of being a plagiary from the writings of Eudoxus.

I doubt not but Dr. Halley is right in preferring Tycho Brahe or Hevelius to Hipparchus, and Kepler to Ptolemey, for being nearer in their calculations than the other. However, the same great master of astronomy assured me, when I consulted him on the subject, that the description of the courses of the five planets in Tully's second book of the Nature of the Gods, there called the five wandering stars, is agreeable to the latest astronomical observations, excepting in one particular, that is, Hesperus (Stella Veneris), which is there said never to go more than two signs from the sun; but Dr. Halley, on whose judgment I much depend, told me it never goes but one and a half.

That the ancients had divided the heavens by the

zodiac, and the zodiac into its dodecatemories, or twelve signs, and that they had given the fixed stars their places in their different hemispheres, separated by the zodiac, is evident from the Phœnomena of Aratus, who, as I observed before, flourished near one hundred and fifty years before Hipparchus; from which time we will proceed higher, to Eudoxus, and from him to Hesiod and Homer, who were near a thousand years before Christ; from several passages in both which poets, it is certain that many of the fixed stars had then the places and figures in the heavens which they now have. Hesiod begins the second book of his Works and Days (Ἔργα καὶ Ἡμέραι) with the rising and setting of the Pleiades. His first precept there, is to reap when the Pleiades rise, and to plough when they set. Immediately after which precept, there is a passage founded on a truly astronomical observation: speaking of the Pleiades, says he,

> There is a time when forty days they lie,
> And forty nights, conceal'd from human eye,
> But in the course of the revolving year,
> When the swain sharps the scythe, again appear.

The time, says the scholiast Tzetzes, in which they lie forty days and forty nights concealed from human eye, is partly in April and partly in May; which, continues he, is occasioned by the vicinity of the sun at that time to the Pleiades; in April he passes through Aries, and in May through Taurus; in the middle of which last sign the Pleiades are placed; and they have the same situation in Flamsteed's Atlas Cœlestis; nor is this the only passage in that very ancient poet founded on astronomical observations. Orion and the

Dog are placed near each other in the same book of the Works and Days as we find them placed in all the modern celestial maps.

To what a great height the science of astronomy had arose in those early ages of Greece, a thousand years before Christ, cannot positively be said, because of the books which are lost. Hesiod wrote a professed treatise of astronomy, scarce any remains of which are delivered down to us. The title of it was Ἀστρονομία Μεγάλη, which might have been, perhaps, the Historia Cœlestis of that age; this book is quoted by Pliny, who says, according to Hesiod, in whose name we have a book of astronomy extant, "the early setting of the Pleiades is about the end of the autumn equinox."

I must here observe, that in the poem called the Shield of Hercules, which is a very ancient piece, though not Hesiod's, there is a description of the constellation Perseus, whose figure answers nearly to that in the present maps.

We may go still higher than the age of Hesiod. sir Isaac Newton, in his Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms amended, among other arguments, has one taken from the astronomical position of the equinoctial and solstitial colures at the time when Chiron observed them. He says the equinoctial colure then passed through the middle of Aries. Chiron was the tutor of Achilles, who was the principal hero in the Trojan war, and must have been many years before Hesiod and Homer. It is of no signification to me, in this Inquiry, whether sir Isaac Newton is right or wrong in the inference that he draws from thence, which is, that the Argonautic expedition was not above nine hundred and thirty-seven years before the Christian era. What I

mention this for here, is to show, in part, the knowledge which the Greeks had of astronomy in those very early times. That sir Isaac Newton is wrong I have no doubt; for, as Mr. Whiston has observed[b], the back of Aries, which contains about ten degrees in length, and was not moved over by its colures in less than seven centuries, is certainly very different from the middle of Aries, which is but a single intersection, and the back in general determines nothing, through which part of the back the colure passed in the days of Chiron. Sir Isaac Newton's design, in his Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms amended, was to reduce all chronology to scripture chronology, and thereby to establish, in that point, the authority of those books. On this weak hypothesis of his own he proceeds to knock down all former chronology; and by this single instance of his wild inference from the colures moving over the back of Aries, we may see how the most considerable men in particular sciences may be blinded by their favour to particular systems. However, from hence it is plain that the heavens were read, and astronomy was improved to a science, in those ages of Greece so remote from us.

I shall here give, from Dr. Gregory's Elements of Physical and Geometrical Astronomy, a catalogue of the fixed stars, as known to the ancients, and as by them placed in the different hemispheres, and then make some observations on their figures. The ancients have distributed the fixed stars visible in our temperate zone into forty-eight images, twelve of which are placed along the whole length of the zodiac. The

[b] In his Confutation of sir Isaac Newton's Chronology.

northern six are Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, and Virgo; the southern are Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, and Pisces. The other figures are placed in the hemispheres separated from one another by the zodiac, and there are twenty-one in the northern hemisphere, the little Bear, the greater Bear, Draco, Cepheus, Boötes, the northern Crown, Hercules, Lyra, Cygnus, Cassiopeia, Perseus, Andromeda, the Triangle, Auriga, Pegasus, Equuleus, the Dolphin, Sagitta, Aquila, Serpentarius, and Serpens. To these were afterwards added the constellations of Antinous, and of Coma Berenices; the first of which was made of the unformed stars between Capricorn and Sagittary, near the Eagle; and Coma Berenices was made of those unformed near the Lion's tail. Ptolemey makes Antinous belong to the Eagle, and Equuleus to Pegasus. In the southern hemisphere are fifteen constellations known to the ancients, Cetus, Eridanus, Lepus, Orion, the great Dog, the little Dog, the ship Argo, Hydra, Crater, Corvus, the Centaur, Lupus, Ara, the southern Crown, and the southern Fishes.

The Greeks, in the figures and names of the constellations, and of the planets, followed former ages in some, and gave names to others from a superstitious regard to their religion; and the names of some of the constellations were originally given in respect to the memories of some eminent persons. That the names could not be given before the times of those persons, from whom they took the names, is certain; but those are of great antiquity. Cepheus was an Æthiopian king, and is recorded to have been a great astronomer; Cassiopeia was his wife, and Andromeda their daugh-

ter; Perseus was the lover of Andromeda, and Pegasus was his horse; of these a fable is told; and the whole family, horse and all, are placed in the heavens in honour to Cepheus the royal astronomer. I cannot conclude this head without observing, that the constellations have still the same names, figures, and places, with very little variation, which the ancients gave them, excepting those constellations lately discovered in a part of the world unkown to those which we call the ancients.

It is certain, from the arguments which I have advanced, that astronomy was improved by the Greeks to a science above a thousand years before Christ; and that it had not its rise in Greece is as certain. Porphyry tells us, that Callisthenes brought from Babylon to Greece observations made near two thousand years before the time of Alexander the Great; the truth of which has been disputed by some, but I know not why, unless it is because such observations may break into some prevailing system of religion.

I must not end my Inquiry into the Astronomy of the Ancients without taking notice of Posidonius's sphere, mentioned by Cicero in his second book of the Nature of the Gods. It is not so much spoke of by ancient authors as Archimedes's sphere; but from what is there said of it, we have no reason to think it inferior to Rowley's orrery.

I now proceed to my Inquiry into the Anatomy of the Ancients; in which I shall endeavour to show that they were not strangers to the offices of the arteries, the veins, and the nerves, and the circulation of the blood.

It appears from Cicero's second book of the Nature

of the Gods, that they had a knowledge of the circulation of the blood, the distribution of it from the heart through certain passages to the lungs, and its return from thence by other certain passages; and Hippocrates often speaks of the constant motion of the blood, and the distribution of it through all the body. The passage of the chyle, in its chemical changes in the body and its secretion from the food, is mentioned in the same book of Cicero.

Celsus tell us, that dissectors among the ancients made their experiments on living as well as dead bodies; which custom, as much as it may savour of barbarity, certainly gave them a greater insight into the structure of the human body, than if their dissections were confined to dead bodies.

I doubt not but modern anatomists have given a more exact account of the structure of the human body, and of the passage of the blood through every part, than any that is now to be found among the remains of ancient writers on the subject. What we have in Cicero's second book of the Nature of the Gods is not to be looked upon as a system; for the Stoic there cursorily runs over the offices of certain parts in the human frame as one proof of a divine being.

I shall here give an extract of the description and offices of the arteries, veins, and nerves, from Dr. G. Douglas's translation of Winslow's Anatomical Exposition of the Structure of the Human Body:

A DESCRIPTION OF THE ARTERIES.

1. The heart throws the blood into two great arteries; one of which is named aorta, the other arteria pulmonaris.

2. The aorta distributes the blood to all the parts of the body, for the nourishment of the parts, and for the secretion of different fluids.

3. The arteria pulmonaris carries the venal blood through all the capillary vessels of the lungs.

4. Both these great or general arteries are subdivided into several branches, and into a great number of ramifications.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE VEINS.

1. The blood, distributed to all parts of the body by two kinds of arteries, the aorta and arteria pulmonaris, returns by three kinds of veins, called by anatomists vena cava, vena portæ, and vena pulmonaris.

2. The vena cava carries back to the right auricle of the heart, the blood conveyed by the aorta to all the parts of the body, except what goes by the arteriæ coronaniæ cordis; it receives all this blood from the arterial ramifications in part directly, and in part indirectly.

3. The vena portæ receives the blood carried to the floating viscera of the abdomen by the arteria cæliaca, and the two mesenteriæ, and conveys it to the vena hepetica, and from thence to the vena cava.

4. The vena pulmonaris conveys to the pulmonary sinus, or left auricle of the heart, the blood carried to the lungs by the arteria pulmonaris.

5. To those three veins two others might be added, viz. those which belong particularly to the heart and to its auricles, and the sinuses of the dura mater.

The auricles may be looked upon as muscular trunks.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE NERVES.

1. All the nerves of the human body come from the cerebrum or cerebellum, by means of the medulla oblongata, or medulla spinalis; they go out in bundles regularly disposed in pairs, like so many different trunks, which are afterwards divided into branches, etc.

2. The nerves of the medulla oblongata go out, for the most part, through the basis of the cranium, at holes situated according to their disposition. Those of the medulla spinalis pass through the lateral foramina of all the vertebræ, and through the great anterior foramina of the os sacrum.

3. We commonly reckon ten pairs of these fasciculi or nervous trunks of the medulla oblongata, nine of which go out separately through particular holes of the basis cranii; and the tenth, which arises from the extremity of that medulla, passes through the great occipital foramen.

4. The trunks from the spinal marrow are twenty-four pairs.

There are many more distributions of the nerves, which need no more to be mentioned here than all the various branches and ramifications of the arteries and veins.

Whatever difference there may be in the account of the disposition and offices of those parts as related

by Cicero, and those described by Winslow, we must not precipitately impute Tully's account to the want of better knowledge in the ancients; because what is said on this subject in the second book of the Nature of the Gods, is neither the writing of a professed anatomist, nor is it introduced as a system of anatomy, but as an illustration of another subject.

If the ancients knew the circulation of the blood, the question that arises is, what are the discoveries which are ascribed to Dr. Harvey? Dr. Harvey, as has been observed by another hand[d], with indefatigable pains traced the visible veins and arteries throughout the body, in their whole journey from and to the heart, so as to demonstrate, even to the most incredulous, not only that the blood circulates through the lungs and the heart, but the very manner how, and the time in which, that great work is performed. This discovery of Dr. Harvey's has been of great use; but the same discovery may have been made in ages far remote from our times, may have been lost in one age and country, and made again in another.—However, as we cannot prove it, we cannot positively say it has been so.

Amongst the ravage that has been made by time over the writings of the ancients, some books of anatomy have been lost; and what they contained we cannot tell, though Galen seems to have consulted all who had wrote before him, and who were extant in his time.

They who would know what skill the ancients had in practical surgery, and in the instruments necessary for it, may learn, in a great measure, from what that emi-

[d] In Dr. Wotton's Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning, chap. 18.

nent and learned surgeon Mr. Charles Barnard has left us on that subject, printed in Dr. Wotton's Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning. "If we inquire," says he, "into the improvements which have been made by the moderns in surgery, we shall be forced to confess, that we have so little reason to value ourselves beyond the ancients, or to be tempted to contemn them, as the fashion is among those who know little and have read nothing, that we cannot give stronger or more convincing proofs of our own ignorance as well as our pride."

THE END.

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